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NOTICE: FBIS wishes to advise that resource constraints will compel discontinuation of the Middle East and South Asia Review effective 1 April.

[Editorial Report]

Lebanon

Sources from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC) disclosed that at least 15 people were killed and 30 injured in the 20 March Israeli raid on PFLP-GC bases in the Al-Biqa' Valley. Most of the victims were civilians who were working in a garage maintained by the PFLP-GC near Barr Ilyas, the sources said.

In another development, three Irish UNIFIL soldiers were killed 21 March when their vehicle hit a mine near the southern village of Bra'shit, according to Israel's IDF radio.

The clandestine Radio Free Lebanon reported further artillery exchanges across the contact lines in and around Beirut 20-21 March, stating that at least 2 people were killed and 10 wounded in the eastern area. The radio accused the Syrians of isolating the Christian community by closing all crossing points into other parts of Lebanon. According to Voice of Lebanon radio, the Turkish Embassy in B'abda has been hit by shells, causing casualties and damage.

In Baghdad, INA noted that a delegation from the government in East Beirut has arrived in Iraq to discuss "economic and trade relations."

Israel

Foreign Minister Moshe Arens briefed Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir on the results of his U.S. visit, IDF radio reported, adding that Arens "could point to only two issues on which the United States and Israel agree." The first is the new administration's opposition to an international conference; the second is U.S. readiness to invest in efforts to find Palestinian interlocutors from the territories who are not affiliated with the PLO. However, "the main bone of contention" is "the U.S. stance stipulating that Israel should start negotiations with the PLO."

Meanwhile, sources close to Shamir criticized the leak to the press of an Israeli intelligence report that concludes there is "no alternative" to the PLO as a Palestinian partner in peace talks, THE JERUSALEM POST noted. These parts of the annual intelligence review were leaked "irresponsibly and distortedly," the sources said.

In a report on the upcoming U.S.-PLO talks, Jerusalem television cited "senior U.S. officials" who said the United States will seek to persuade the PLO to agree to direct talks between Israel and Palestinian representatives from the territories on interim arrangements. In return, the United States will "guarantee" the PLO the status of full partner in future negotiations on final accords.

On the situation in the territories, Jerusalem radio reported that 13 Arabs and two Israeli soldiers were injured in clashes 20-21 March.

Regarding Israel's military capability, the chief of staff announced that Israel is improving its capacity to strike at Syrian missile launching pads, according to the radio.

PLO Affairs

At a Baghdad press conference cited by WAKH, PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat denied reports that he will participate in the upcoming PLO-U.S. talks in Tunisia. Baghdad Voice of the PLO radio noted that 'Arafat denounced Israel's "ugly crimes" and "mad escalation" in the occupied territories, and he urged the world community to ensure protection of Palestinian citizens.

In another development following the recent violence in the occupied territories, 'Arafat's adviser Bassam Abu Sharif urged the U.S. Administration to intercede swiftly to end Israeli "massacres," according to AFP.

Inter-Arab Affairs

Syria's President Hafiz al-Asad is ready to set up a union with Iraq "without any reservations," according to Libya's Major 'Abd al-Salam Jallud in a speech to Arab health ministers broadcast by Tripoli television. Jallud said this aim was disclosed by al-Asad during his recent visit to Libya, and contended that such a union would be the "solution" to the problems of the Arab east.

Sudan

Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi and Muhammad Uthman al-Mirghani, leader of the Democratic Unionist Party, agreed on the formation of a new "broad-based" government, according to SUNA citing a 21 March statement on the talks between the two leaders.

The Constituent Assembly has postponed further meetings until 27 March to await the completion of consultations on the formation of the new government, according to MENA. The agency added that al-Sadiq al-Mahdi has postponed his speech to the Assembly which was expected on 22 March.

Iran

New Year Messages—Tehran television broadcast messages by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeyni and President 'Ali Khamene'i on the occasion of Nowruz, the Iranian new year. Khomeyni stressed the need to "overcome carnal desires" with self-discipline, though he acknowledged that he personally has "not succeeded in this task." Khamene'i's message said the Iranian nation should follow "piety and abstemiousness" in the coming year, concentrating their energies on the initiation of extensive reconstruction. He disclosed that the special council set up by Khomeyni to determine reconstruction policy has now completed its work and agreed on a policy, which has been submitted to Khomeyni and to the government.

East Bloc Weapons—The Abu Dhabi paper AL-ITTIHAD reported that Romania and Czechoslovakia have signed agreements to supply Iran with tanks and help it build arms factories, AFP reported. Iran will receive 300 armored vehicles and tanks from Romania, and 180 T-54 and T-55 tanks from Czechoslovakia.

Turkish Accusation—Criticism in the Iranian Majlis of Turkey's ban on Islamic headdress for women in Turkish universities was denounced by the speaker of the Turkish Grand National Assembly as "interference in Turkey's internal affairs," Ankara radio reported. He expressed "amazement and regret" that the Majlis has taken up the issue. A recent report by Istanbul's MILLIYET accused Iran of inciting fundamentalism in Turkey through Turkish-language broadcasts that are beamed at eastern Turkey but are unheard in Ankara.

Afghanistan

UN observers should be stationed on the border with Pakistan to monitor violations of the Geneva accords, President Najibullah declared in his New Year address broadcast by Kabul radio. Pakistan has "not yet taken the smallest step" toward implementing the accords, he claimed, adding that the United Nations should "employ serious efforts" to ensure their implementation.

The 19 March press conference in Kabul which presented two Pakistani "spies" was described as "cheap propaganda" by a Pakistani Foreign Ministry spokesman cited by Islamabad radio. He claimed it has not been proved that the two men are Pakistanis, and even if they are they would not be the first foreigners compelled to "play the tune of Kabul's propaganda."

Foreign Minister 'Abdul Wakil announced 20 March that government troops have cleared the Kabul-Jalalabad highway of rebels, making it possible to dispatch "large consignments" of food and ammunition to Jalalabad, Moscow radio reported. However, according to reports cited by Islamabad radio, the mujahidin have blown up the main bridge on the Kabul-Jalalabad highway, captured three government positions near Jalalabad airport, and taken 50 soldiers prisoner. The radio also cited reports that the Kabul regime mounted "heavy bombing raids" on villages along the Salang highway killing about 90 civilians, mostly women and children.

Islamic Affairs

Delegates Address ICO Foreign Ministers Session

Iran's Tashkiri Urges Unity

LD1403111989 Tehran IRNA in English 1105 GMT 14 Mar 89

[Text] Kuwait, March 14, IRNA—Iran wants stronger unity and fraternal ties among all Islamic states to face plots hatched by enemies of Islam, an Iranian official said in an interview printed here.

Head of the Iranian delegation to the Islamic Conference, Mohammad 'Ali Taskiri told daily AL-SIYASAH that Iran took part in the meeting in Riyadh to invite Islamic countries to take a decisive stand against any attack on Islamic sanctities.

He said Iran would pursue a policy of strengthening ties with all Islamic countries. "In this framework, relations with neighbouring countries is of special importance," he stressed.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Taskhiri is the deputy head of the Islamic Propagation Organization.

YAR's Al-Iryani on Peace Issues

JN1503180589 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 15 Mar 89

[Text] Brother 'Abd al-Karim al-Iryani, deputy prime minister, foreign minister, and member of the standing committee, affirmed in the afternoon session of the Islamic Conference Organization foreign ministers' 18th round yesterday evening that the international peace conference in the Middle East is the successful way to find a comprehensive solution for the Palestine question and achieve peace in the region.

He indicated that U.S. collusion and Zionist stubborness led to a delay in holding the international peace conference on the Middle East.

On Lebanon, 'Abd al-Karim al-Iryani affirmed our country's concern for the safety and independence of the country and its support for the current efforts of the six-member Arab country to solve the Lebanese crisis.

The deputy prime minister and foreign minister called on Iraq and Iran to speed up the exchange of POW's and continue the negotiations between them to realize permanent peace in the region.

Qatari Minister Backs PLO

JN1503213989 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1800 GMT 15 Mar 89

[Excerpts] Riyadh, 15 Mar (WAKH)—The State of Qatar has renewed its strong condemnation of the aggressive practices of the Israeli occupation authorities against the Palestinian people in the occupied territories. These practices include murdering citizens, collective detentions, demolishing houses, destroying crops, violating sacred places, infringing on freedoms, and deporting citizens from their lands.

Qatar described these practices as a clear violation of the UN Charter, the international agreements, and principles of the international law. It also asserted that these practices demonstrate the occupation authorities' failure to suppress the blessed Palestinian intifadah [uprising].

In the speech delivered by Shaykh Ahmad ibn Sayf Al Thani, Qatari minister of state for foreign affairs, before the 18th Islamic Conference Organization [ICO] foreign ministers session, Qatar praised the Palestinian people's valiant intifadah in the occupied territory.

Qatar renewed its political and material support for the intifadah in order to achieve its goals. It urged the Islamic and friendly countries, the liberation forces, and international organizations to support the Palestinian decision to regain the Palestinian rights and provide the best circumstances for stability and peace in the region.

Qatar also praised the historic decision of the Palestine National Council extraordinary session to proclaim the establishment of the Palestinian state, which was recognized by the majority of world states. It urged other countries to recognize that state.

The State of Qatar expressed its support and backing for any step made by the PLO in its capacity as the Palestinian people's sole legitimate representative. It asserted the need to convene the international conference for peace in the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations with the participation of all parties concerned on an equal footing, including the PLO, to help achieve a just and comprehensive peace and restore the Palestinian people's full rights in their homeland, including their right to self-determination and an independent state. It also expressed the hope that direct dialogue between the PLO and the United States will continue in order to pave the way for peace in the region.

Regarding the situation in the Gulf region following the end of the Iraqi-Iranian war, Shaykh Ahmad ibn Sayf Al Thani expressed Qatar's great satisfaction with the recent positive developments in the region, represented by the cease-fire and the peace talks between the two sides. He also expressed the hope that these negotiations—conducted under the auspices of the UN secretary general—will result in a full implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 598 and achieve the permanent and comprehensive solution to the problem in a manner that will achieve security and stability in the region and secure the freedom of navigation in the international waters and passageways in the Gulf.

Regarding the current situation in Lebanon, the Qatari minister urged all states and Lebanese sides to give help and support to the six-member Arab committee charged with treating the Lebanese crisis in order to enable it to play its role in finding the suitable solution to the crisis. He expressed hope that the work of this committee will be crowned with success. He also urged all Lebanese sides to put their country's supreme interest before any other consideration and to cooperate fully with the committee in order to achieve the desired objective, which will restore to Lebanon its security, stability, and role in Arab and Islamic action.

The Qatari minister also expressed Qatar's satisfaction with the Soviet troops withdrawal from Afghanistan, asserting that this will enable the Afghan Muslim people to restore peace, stability, and security to their country. He urged the international community to rebuild what was destroyed by the war, pointing out that this will help achieve comprehensive peace and bring about stability and tranquility for the Afghan people.

Shaykh Ahmad ibn Sayf Al Thani denounced the policies of the apartheid entity in South Africa and its aggressive practices against the neighboring African countries. He welcomed the signs of the independence of Namibia, expressing hope that it will take its place in the world community and that its independence will contribute toward bolstering peace and construction in the world community.

Shaykh Ahmad urged all countries in the world to respond to the proposals calling for the establishment of nuclear free zones in Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia. He renewed Qatar's condemnation of the collusion and cooperation between Israel and South Africa in the production of nuclear and chemical weapons. [passage omitted]

The Qatari minister pointed out that Muslims all over the world were pained by what the enemies of Islam are doing to distort the substance of Islamic doctrine through various means, the last of which was a book published with the aim of harming Islam and Muslims. He said that the State of Qatar supports the decision reached by the Mecca Jurisprudence Society during its recent session to denounce what came in that book of falsehoods and distortions of the Islamic beliefs. He urged all countries all over the world to protect Islam and confront these practices which harm the pure religion of Islam. [passage omitted]

UAE Minister on 'Zionist Campaign'

JN1603081289 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1940 GMT 15 Mar 89

[Text] Riyadh, 15 Mar (WAKH)—The United Arab Emirates [UAE] has called on Iraq and Iran to show more flexibility and goodwill in the peace negotiations in order to reach an earlier agreement on just and comprehensive peace between them, affirming that it will not spare any effort to help them achieve this objective.

Addressing the 18th Islamic Conference Organization [ICO] foreign ministers session tonight, Rashid 'Abdallah, UAE minister of state for foreign affairs, affirmed that as an Islamic and Gulf state, the UAE aspires for the return of security, peace, and stability to the Gulf region based on equal sovereign rights and on principles of good neighborliness and noninterference in other people's internal affairs.

Rashid 'Abdallah reaffirmed the need to achieve a just and comprensive settlement of the Palestine question which guarantees the Palestinian people's rights, especially their firm, inalienable right to repatriation, self-determination, and the establishment of their independent state on Palestinian soil under the leadership of the PLO—their sole, legitimate representative.

The UAE minister renewed his call for the Zionist forces' withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories, including holy Jerusalem, the Golan, and Southern Lebanon and urged a firm and strong confrontation against all Zionist measures aimed at obliterating the Arab and Islamic character of the occupied Arab territories.

The UAE minister affirmed that his country strongly rejects the rabid Zionist campaign to Judaize Jerusalem and strongly condemns Zionist violations of the sanctity of Islamic and Christian holy places.

The minister reaffirmed the UAE's commitment to the collective Islamic work program and all the resolutions issued by the Jerusalem Committee as well as its adherence to the Arab and Islamic character of holy Jerusalem. The minister called for concerted efforts to liberate Jerusalem from Zionist filth by all legitimate means and to return Jerusalem to Arab and Islamic sovereignty.

Regarding the situation in Lebanon, Rashid 'Abdallah said the UAE is especially interested in helping fraternal Lebanon overcome its tribulation and differences which have mutilated its national unity. This, he said, is obvious from Shaykh Zayid's directives and well-meaning initiative, which was welcomed by the Lebanese leaders and led to the formation of the six-man Arab committee to save Lebanon from its tribulation. He expressed hope that the committee would achieve its mission.

The minister said the committee's meetings with Lebanese officials and spiritual leaders so far and the meetings which it intends to hold later constitute suitable ground for a serious and constructive approach to rid Lebanon of its problems.

He affirmed in this respect that the return of stability in Lebanon is closely tied to the Israeli forces' withdrawal from its territories, noninterference in Lebanon's internal affairs, and withholding Zionist aid to the agent militias.

The minister called on the ICO to protect Islam from the campaigns aimed at distorting and polluting it, saying: We must all rise to support God's supreme word, assert right, and eliminate falsehood. The Islamic nation is dutybound to protect its heritage.

Concluding, the minister welcomed the complete Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan and expressed hope that Islamic Afghanistan would soon reoccupy its place within the ICO.

Palestinian Affairs

PFLP-GC CC Member 'Martyred' in Israeli Raid

JN2103130589 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1200 GMT 21 Mar 89

[Text] Brother strugglers: In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Among the believers are men who have been true to their covenant with God: Of them, some have completed their vow to the extreme, and some still wait: But they have never changed [their determination] in the least. [Koranic verse]

Brothers, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command [PFLP-GC] Political Bureau and Central Committee mourns with the Arab nation and our great Palestinian Arab people the martyr hero, Salih 'Abbas 'Abbas Abu Tariq, member of the PFLP-GC Central Committee, member of the Field Command, and head of the Logistic Branch, who was martyred while standing fast as a result of the cowardly [Israeli] military raid, which targeted PFLP-GC administrative centers on Monday, 20 March 1989, because of the PFLP-GC's opposition to the course of capitulation, abandonment, and concessions; and because of the PFLP-GC's determination [to adhere to] the course of armed struggle and the course of the glorious intifadah [uprising].

The hero martyr, Salih 'Abbas 'Abbas Abu Tariq, was born in 1935. He joined the PFLP-GC in 1962 during the phases of underground action. He took part in a number of combat patrols inside Palestine. He led a number of combat patrols inside Palestine. He participated in the defense of the revolution in Jordan and in the Al-Karamah battle. He participated in the defense of the revolution in Lebanon. He was elected to the Central Committee during the sixth PFLP-GC National Conference in 1986. He was appointed a member of the Military Field Command in 1988. He participated in a number of successful pan-Arab missions.

The PFLP-GC Political Bureau, Central Committee, cadres, members, and supporters vow, on the soul of our hero martyr, Salih 'Abbas 'Abbas Abu Tariq, to continue, with full determination, the course of armed struggle until the liberation of land and man.

[Signed] PFLP-GC Political Bureau.

Abu Sharif Calls on Bush To End Israeli Killing

NC2003182689 Paris AFP in English 1752 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Tunis, March 20 (AFP)—The Palestine Liberation Organization seeks U.S. President George Bush's help to end the Israeli killing of Palestinians in the occupied territories, an adviser to PLO chairman Yasir 'Arafat said here Monday.

"The PLO calls on Mr. Bush, the U.S. Administration and the other permanent members of the United Nations Security Council to intercede swiftly and end the Israeli massacres in the territories it occupies," Bassam Abu Sharif said.

His comments came in the wake of a weekend of violence in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip during which seven Palestinians were shot dead and more than 60 wounded.

"What is happening today in the occupied territories is a declaration of war against the Palestinian people," he told AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE.

The remarks came 48 hours ahead of a resumption of talks between PLO representatives and U.S. officials.

In December, Washington reversed a 13-year ban on talks with the PLO after Mr. 'Arafat renounced terrorism and acknowledged Israel's right to exist within secure borders. The two sides have so far held one official meeting, on December 16.

PLO Issues Statement on Gaza Mosque 'Massacre'

JN2003165589 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1600 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] The PLO yesterday issued a political statement on the bestial massacre committed by the Israeli army against the Palestinian citizens and worshippers in Al-Shaykh Radwan mosque and the region around it. The statement said:

The Zionist enemy continues its ugly murders, massacres, and the murderous escalation campaign against our people and sons in the occupied territories in an attempt to impose its loathed occupation and put an end to the intifadah [uprising] by force. Today, the Israeli army committed an ugly murder to be added to the record of its murders. Its forces stormed Al-Shaykh Radwan mosque in heroic Gaza and opened fire on the worshippers there. As a result of that, three of our heroes died, and more than 30 citizens were injured, some seriously.

This crime comes only a few days after the enemy's massacre in Nabulus. These crimes will only increase the firmness and strength of our people and their belief in the inevitability of victory. If they prove anything, then they only prove the mental stage the enemy has reached because of the sheer steadfastness of our blessed intifadah, which has driven it crazy. It is lashing out like a wounded wolf against our people and masses.

The PLO is following up these new crimes to ask our struggling and faithful masses to be more steadfast and firm in the face of this enemy. Victory will come after patience. Victory is definitely coming. Dawn will certainly break. Our state is within a stone's throw.

PPSF Condemns Meetings With Israeli Officials

JN1903150089 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1425 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] Damascus, 19 Mar (SANA)—The Palestinian Popular Struggle Front has condemned the meetings held between some Palestinian figures in the occupied territories and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir and other Zionist officials and considers them a stab in the back of the popular intifadah [uprising].

In a press statement today, Khalid 'Abd al-Majid, the front's official spokesman, asserted that these meetings and contacts are an attempt to circumvent and abort the Palestinian intifadah in favor of the self-rule administrative plans that were rejected both by our people's masses and the PLO. These meetings and contacts are also part of the ongoing attempts to conclude separate deals based on the proposed U.S. solutions, he added.

The front urged all nationalist Palestinian forces, factions, and figures as well as the PLO's bodies and institutions to shoulder their responsibilities and confront this dangerous, destructive policy that will inflict grave damage on the Palestinian Arab people's struggle and their cause and revolution.

Al-Quds Broadcasts 'Names of Relinquishment'

JN1903141089 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1215 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] O struggler brothers, here are the names of those who claim they represent the will of the Palestinian Arab people and who attended the meeting of relinquishment at the Ambassador Hotel in holy Jerusalem. Each of the names that we will broadcast should be disgraced until our heroic people inflict punishment on them:

Dr Sari Nusaybah, lecturer and advocate of the theory of obtaining the Zionist nationality. Our people have taught him a light lesson to remind him that he does not represent our people and that he should not speak for our heroic people.

Dr Mamduh al-'Ikr, who was relieved of his work in Kuwait. He worked at the Al-Maqasid Hospital after 1980. He was fired from his job at Al-Maqasid Hospital. He changed his organizational affiliation several times.

Ghassan 'Abdallah, journalist and writer. Whenever he was arrested by the Zionist authorities, he adopted a new document of concession and surrender. There is doubt about his organizational affiliation.

Dr Ghassan al-Khatib, a lecturer in Bi'r Zayt. He used to contact the Zionists. This is not his first meeting with the Zionists. He is Dr Sari Nusaybah's partner in his contacts.

Dr Jamal al-Musalsa', who, they say, took part in the meeting to deliver the speeches of those who feared at the last moment to attend the meeting as a result of our people's anger, especially in the city of Gaza and the heroic Gaza Strip.

Dr Salim Kamal, a lecturer at Bethlehem University.

Dr Jad al-Haq, a lecturer at Bethlehem University

O struggler brothers, this is the list of the names of relinquishment. This is the list of departure from the will of our militant people. This is the namelist of people who are swimming in the sea of blood, which flows from the bodies of our heroes and heroines.

O struggler brothers, we do not want to elaborate on the broadcasting of the names. Our people will certainly deter and punish this handful of people. May God be with us. Victory is imminent. Let us march on the road of liberating land and man.

'Arafat Gives News Conference in Baghdad

JN2003192389 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1735 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Baghdad, 20 Mar (WAKH)—PLO chief Yasir 'Arafat condemned the latest Israeli criminal escalation in the occupied Arab territories. He said this failed attempt reveals the dimensions of Yitzhaq Shamir's recent scheme to foil the intifadah [uprising].

'Arafat pointed out that Israel believes that the criminal operations of its army, together with the racist settlers, can dishearten our people, who have been confronting the occupation with stones for 15 months.

Mr 'Arafat told a number of Arab and international news agency correspondents in Baghdad today that Shamir's plan is based on stepping up operations against the intifadah in the occupied territories and continuing the war scenario in southern Lebanon.

'Arafat arrived in Baghdad at dawn yesterday on a visit to Iraq for several days.

'Arafat stressed that the Israeli leadership believes the outbreak of a new war in southern Lebanon can be an escape from its crisis with the intifadah. Southern Lebanon is the only region where Israel can start a war without getting a green light from its Western allies, whether American or European.

'Arafat declared that the PLO has placed its forces on a state of extreme alert. He said: We are preparing ourselves to confront this scenario with all our resources. However, he did not discuss the PLO's preparations to confront the possibility of a new Israeli aggression in southern Lebanon.

He added that the Palestinian preparations include the field situation in southern Lebanon and revealing Israeli schemes to the world.

He pointed out that the PLO has informed the Arab League, the European troika, the Soviet leadership, the Chinese leadership, and the U.S. Government of the information dealing with Israeli preparations for war. The PLO also informed the nonaligned group, the Islamic Conference Organization, and the U.S. Administration through its ambassador in Tunis.

Mr 'Arafat refuted the allegations of some European nations that there is no Palestinian government that can facilitate the recognition process.

He said: If the issue depends on forming a government, the PLO, in accordance with the Palestine National Council resolutions, takes charge of the Palestinian government's affairs.

He attributed the reason for the delay in declaring the Palestinian state to the issue of electing cadres from inside the occupied territories. He said: The PLO does not want to be a reason for the enemy authorities to deport from the occupied territories whoever is chosen.

He added: We accept their imprisonment inside the occupied territories, but we do not accept their deportation.

'Arafat expressed his hope that the superpowers will meet their moral obligations toward recognizing the Palestinian state.

He said: Where is the promise by former U.S. President Ronald Reagan that he will instruct his secretary of state to meet with his Palestinian counterpart after the PLO declares its recognition of Resolutions 242 and 338?

He affirmed that the PLO deals with superpowers that place their interests above their commitments.

He said that the PLO has decided to expand the campaign of gathering gold from Palestinian women inside the Arab homeland and in the world.

He pointed out that the first signs of the campaign, which has already started in Qatar and Kuwait, were great and that the new step will start in Iraq for the same purpose.

He affirmed that the gold collected will not be sold but deposited in banks as security for bonds.

He expressed his hope that the PLO will be able to collect 1.5 million pieces of gold jewelry.

He indicated that a Palestinian passport cannot be issued before it is presented to the first Arab summit to gain recognition for the Palestinian passport and guarantee total immunity to its bearer.

He said that the Arab interior ministers welcomed this topic at their last meeting. He said that the PLO Central Council will review at its next meeting in Baghdad four studies by the legal committee, which was previously formed, to present its recommendations on the new Palestinian state.

On the war Israel is preparing to launch in southrn Lebanon, the PLO chief said Israel is preparing to begin another folly there. The Israelis will have to learn that southern Lebanon is not a sitting duck. 'Arafat predicted that the war being cooked by Israel will probably be in early summer and not later than May 1989.

The PLO leader said the preemptive strike the Israelis have been talking about recently is to lay the groundwork for the military operation that has been agreed upon with certain agent parties in the region. It is against this background that we can understand the escalation Israel has brought about in southern Lebanon, said the PLO chief.

In reply to a question about Israel's objective in this new war, 'Arafat said: We think, from our knowledge of the Israeli mentality, that the aim will be to create new realities or to divert attention from the intifadah. 'Arafat stressed that such an operation will have unpredictable consequences. He vigorously denied that the PLO has received an American request to cease Palestinian action emanating from southern Lebanon. No Palestinian official has made an undertaking as to the nature or mode of our resistance to the enemy and the defense of our camps in southern Lebanon. The PLO leader said he does not feel any embarrassment about the Palestinian action in southern Lebanon. If some people think that their operations cause me embarrassment, I will tell them Yasir 'Arafat is not embarrassed by such action.

'Arafat added: I would like to ask them where they have been over the past 6 years when Palestinian camps needed to be defended. Sabra and Shatila and Burj al-Barajinah camps fell at the hands of agents during the intifadah. The blood of the residents of Sabra and Shatila is on their hands. We are shouldering the responsibility of defending the camps from the north to Al-Rashidiyah, and at the same time receiving blows from Israel and its agents.

The Palestinian leader disclosed that the PLO has prepared an important working paper that will be presented at the new round of U.S.-Palestinian dialogue, slated for Tunis next Wednesday [22 March]. The paper focuses on the peace process, particularly the need for a speedy convocation of the international conference. 'Arafat flatly denied reports that he will lead the Palestinian side in the next round of the American-Palestinian dialogue, calling the reports baseless, inaccurate, and illogical. The PLO is still waiting for the paper that the EC announced it has prepared on the Palestinian question, said 'Arafat. He hoped the paper will prove up to par. Europe is committed to a recognition of the Palestine state since it recognizes Israel, said the PLO leader. The European nations recognized Israel according to UN Resolution No 181 that provides for an Arab and a Jewish state. This resolution is Israel's only birth certificate, and Europe ought to recognize the remainder of the resolution, 'Arafat said.

'Arafat Urges Protection for Territories

JN2003211789 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1920 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Brother leader Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] has stressed that events in the occupied Palestinian territories over the past days emphasize once again the pressing need for sending international forces to protect Palestinian citizens.

In press statements, brother leader Abu 'Ammar said the ugly crimes perpetrated and being perpetrated by the Zionist occupation forces in Gaza, Nabulus, the village of Silat al-Harithiyah, and other towns, villages, and camps, and in which scores of people were martyred and hundreds were injured, proved on one hand the impossibility of suppressing the popular intifadah [uprising], which is greatly escalating despite the ugly Zionist oppression. On the other hand, they emphasize the need for a swift action by the world community to ensure the protection of Palestinian citizens and speed up the convening of the international conference for peace in the Middle East.

Brother leader Abu 'Ammar said that PLO ambassadors and representatives have been instructed to move and contact the various regional and international organizations with a view to apprising them of the recent Israeli escalation and demanding speedy international moves to put an end to the ugly crimes. Brother leader Abu 'Ammar said the mad Israeli escalation is the second part of the Israeli moves before Shamir's visit to Washington. The first part, he explained, is to promote false peace plans.

'Arafat Reportedly Mediating in Afghan Problem

JN1903101089 Paris AL-MUSTAQBAL in Arabic 18 Mar 89 pp 20, 22

[By Sulayman Nimr]

[Text] When the Palestinian chief Yasir 'Arafat started his discussions with Pakistani Prime Minister Mrs Benazir Bhutto in Islamabad on 9 March, he surprised his Pakistani hostess with accurate information about all aspects and developments on the Afghan problem, to an extent that she started doubting the information provided her by her own organs. This made her attend a meeting the next day that Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] held with an Afghan delegation, including 10 of the mujahidin leaders headed by Dayfullah Mojaddedi to discuss a means of reaching a peaceful solution to close the last chapters of the Afghan war. In this meeting, in the presence of Benazir Bhutto, Abu 'Ammar presented his plan and ideas on solving the problem. The mujahidin leaders were surprised by Abu 'Ammar's plan and asked him for some explanations and details. Some of them, especially Sibghatullah Mojaddedi, showed a positive understanding of these ideas. They said, however, that they wanted to consult with each other over these ideas.

Since 'Arafat knows that a decision on the Afghan solution is linked to a number of foreign forces involved in and affecting the internal forces in Afghanistan, foremost of which is Pakistan, he proposed his plan to the Pakistani Government and, specifically, its prime minister. He did this firstly so that some Pakistani and international organs would lose the chance of obstructing the Palestinian solution for the sake of the Afghanistan problem. THE WASHINGTON POST pointed out that some soldiers in Pakistan, especially the military intelligence organ, in their stands on solving the Afghan problem, are working on strengthening the stands of the hardline fundamentalist Afghan groups, one of which is the 'Usuli Eslami Party headed by Engineer Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, Afghan Provisional Government foreign minister, and, since Tehran is interested in the Afghan problem, where the eight Shi'ite organizations have adopted the mujahidin, the Pakistani Foreign Minister Sahabzada Yaqub Khan traveled to the Iranian capital carrying with him what is better termed as Mr 'Arafat's ideas to solve the Afghan problem. These ideas were described by the Pakistani prime minister and her political crew as encouraging and positive.

But what were these ideas that the Palestinian chief proposed as a plan to end the Afghan crisis peacefully, and what is the relationship of the PLO to the Afghan problem?

We must first point out that the Afghan issue was discussed in detail between USSR Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze and Yasir 'Arafat during a meeting they held in Cairo on 23 February. During this meeting, the Soviet minister told Abu 'Ammar that the Soviet Union, after withdrawing from Afghanistan, is ready to support any agreement that will end the armed conflicts betwen the Kabul government and the Afghan mujahidin in a manner that will cause the Najibullah government to resign and allow a new government to be formed in which the ruling communist party will participate with a specific number of ministers.

Shevardnadze asked Abu 'Ammar to sponsor a peace initiative to settle the Afghan problem on this basis as this problem will continue to be a source of worry for the Soviets and will prevent them from participating in the political moves for settling the Middle East crisis. The Soviet minister asked Abu 'Ammar to mediate in this affair because he knew that the PLO enjoys good relations with some of the Afghan parties, particularly with Professor Ahmad Shah, the leader of one of the mujahidin organizations, who at one time in his life had joined the Palestinian Revolution Forces. The Soviet minister also knew that there is a PLO liaison officer in the Peshawar area, whose name is Abu Khalid [not further identified], who has good relations with the Afghan mujahidin organizations. Shevardnadze also knew that Abu 'Ammar has good relations with Islamabad and Riyadh, which can influence the Afghan mujahidin organizations that are fighting in Afghanistan in view of their support for these organizations. As for Iran, which is the third regional party that has an influence on the state of affairs in Afghanistan, the Soviet foreign minister's visit to Tehran and the improvement of Soviet-Iranian relations at this stage will be a factor that will contribute to the elimination of any obstacles the pro-Iranian mujahidin organizations may raise. During the meeting between Abu 'Ammar and Shevardnadze which also discussed Soviet moves for the convocation of an internatiomal peace conference, the Soviet minister spoke in detail about the Afghan problem, the impact it has on the Soviet Union and on its role in the region, a role that the PLO is concerned about. The PLO leader immediately summoned Abu Khalid, the Palestinian representative in Peshawar, for consultations. Abu Khalid submitted detailed reports on the Afghan mujahidin organizations and their state of affairs, and about the Najibullah government in Kabul's situation and the state of affairs on the ground in Afghanistan.

'Arafat found it difficult, if not impossible to envisage the possibility of the mujahidin successfully settling the situation militarily on the ground in their favor once and for all, because the Najibullah regime has been left with no choice but to fight until death, since the intransigence displayed by most mujahidin organizations leaves Najibullah supporters with no room for escape. This prompts Afghan Army personnel and the militiamen of the party ruling in Kabul to fight with unprecedented ferocity and bolstered morale. Besides, the military and logistical situation of this army has remained strong, as the Soviets left all of their military equipment and supplies to the Najibullah army before their withdrawal. This has been shown through the failure of the Afghan mujahidin's attempt to control the city of Jalalabad last week and even through their failure to control its airport after they sustained grave losses amounting to more than 2,500 persons killed. A source who followed the Jalalabad battles disclosed that the Afghan Army stationed in the city used, during these battles, two of the destructive Soviet "Frog" missiles which settled the situation militarily.

It has been noticed that Soviet messages sent to the PLO chairman increased during the past 3 weeks, either through Soviet envoys or through socialist bloc states. The first of these messages was conveyed to Abu 'Ammar after Shevardnadze concluded his talks with the Iranian officials and met Imam Khomeyni in Tehran. The results of these talks, which were explained in the message sent by the Soviet minister, encouraged Abu 'Ammar to formulate ideas to be contained in a plan designed to resolve the Afghan problem. The solution is based on finding an honorable way out for the Kabul government. The main idea envisaged in this plan calls for the formation of a broad-based Afghan government comprising all political forces and the mujahidin organizations, including the party currently ruling in Kabul. There will be no objection to seeing the Afghan mujahidin control the majority of this government, according to this plan. Besides, the plan stipulates that this government will be an interim one that will rule Afghanistan for a period to be agreed upon. Following that period, it is envisaged that parliamentary elections will be held in the country. All Afghan forces, parties, and organizations are to take part in these elections according to this solution. A new government will be formed in accordance with the results of these elections. In Islamabad, Abu 'Ammar presented his ideas and explained in detail the situation in Afghanistan in general and the Kabul government's situation in particular. He found Benazir Bhutto and her foreign minister ready to help these ideas materialize in cooperation with the Afghan and other parties concerned.

An informed source has revealed to AL-MUSTAQBAL that 'Arafat received, during his presence in New Delhi on 8 March, a message from the GDR Government in which Berlin voiced its readiness to contribute to the reconstruction effort in Afghanistan once peace is established there on the basis of this agreement. This GDR message, which was undoubtedly sent at the behest of Moscow, showed that the Soviets are ready, through their allies, to pay reparations for the Afghan people through participation in the reconstruction effort.

Abu 'Ammar ended these urgent moves of his, during which he visited New Delhi, Islamabad, and Dhaka, with a visit to the Saudi capital. During this visit, he met with King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz of Saudi Arabia last Sunday [12 March] to brief him on his plan for resolving the Afghan problem, requesting the participation of Riyadh, which has a big role in resolving the Afghan problem. A source accompanying Abu 'Ammar said that the Saudi monarch welcomed Abu 'Ammar's endeavors to resolve the Afghan problem and voiced his readiness to help in these endeavors.

But, what is the mujahidin's stand vis-a-vis Abu 'Ammar's plan?

In a statement to AL-MUSTAQBAL, Eng. Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, Afghan mujahidin government's foreign minister and a hardliner, said: "It is impossible for us to form a coalition government with the communist government." When we asked him: "What is the solution in your opinion?" He answered: "The solution lies in the surrender of the regime officials and army personnel. We will guarantee their safety." And on their [regime officials and army personnel] future as a political party, Hikmatyar said: "This is an issue that will be decided by the elected shura."

This is what was said by a hardliner among the Afghan mujahidin leaders. However, there are moderate Afghan mujahidin leaders who might accept this plan, especially if military developments prove during the forthcoming period the impossibility of settling the issue militarily once and for all, despite the optimism being voiced by the mujahidin as regards their realization of victory. Moreover, the extremist Afghan organizations might also accept this plan if positive and strong regional pressures are exerted on them; and this eventuality seemed achievable during the talks held by Abu 'Ammar in Islamabad and Riyadh and also during the talks held by the Soviet foreign affairs minister in Tehran.

If Abu 'Ammar's plan succeeds, this would mean that Palestine will have resolved the Afghan problem, while still waiting to see its own problem resolved.

'Arafat Message on 16th Month of 'Uprising'

LD1003192889 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 9 Mar 89

[Message from PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat to Palestinians inside and outside the occupied territories at the start of the "uprising's" 16th month—read by announcer]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. [passage omitted] Masses of the blessed intifadah [uprising], heroes of stones and Molotovs, strugglers for the freedom and independence of the homeland, you who stand fast in the face of the army of occupation and its ferocity, you who stand fast in the camps of pride and steadfastness in southern Lebanon, our struggling masses in the occupied homeland and in the lands of emigration and dispersement:

Your great intifadah today enters its 16th month with steadfast feet. [passage omitted]

Glory to you stone-throwing heroes. Today the whole world stands in reverance and veneration for your arms, rare valor, precious sacrifices, unparalleled steadfastness, and strong willpower, which affirm to the usurping Zionist occupiers that the era of occupation has ended, never to return; that the hour of freedom has come; and that the sun of Palestine today shines on an entire people who are determined to live freely, as masters in their free and independent land and who swear to put a decisive end to the Zionist occupation of their homeland and, God willing, to build their independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital. [passage omitted]

In the 15th month of the intifadah, our people and their revolution recorded sweeping victories against occupation, both in the land and in international political circles. While our beloved heroes of the intifadah were continuing their daily victories against the occupation army and were proving to the world the impossibility of the occupation and domination continuing, your steadfast masses in southern Lebanon were consolidating, protecting their independent willpower in the face of the double seige imposed upon them. At the same time, your brothers in all places of struggle were scoring great victories that strengthen the revolution, protect the march, and bring close the hour of victory. They have intensified the enemy's isolation on the international level and have exposed its abominable fascist, racist face.

Important events and developments followed. Thus the visit of the Soviet foreign minister, Comrade Shevardnadze, to our Arab area and our meeting with him in Cairo put a decisive check on the fantasies of our Zionist enemy, who seeks in vain to circumvent international will. Comrade Shevardnadze declared that the Soviet position stands for the convocation of an international conference under UN auspices with the participation of the permanent members of the UN Security Council and with the full participation of the PLO at all stages of the conference. He said that the USSR will not restore its diplomatic relations with Israel until that country agrees to an international conference and accepts negotiatons with the PLO.

Then came the friendly Chinese attitude, which the Chinese leaders expressed to U.S. President George Bush—a clear and decisive stand on the side of our people, pouring in to the friendly international stream that has began to flow thanks to your steadfastness and the Palestinian stone.

The stands of the USSR, China, Europe, the nonaligned countries, and the Islamic and African countries, the new Japanese stand, and the stance of whole world today constitute an important and effective force in moving events and drawing up the future of the region, despite the obduracy and false arrogance of the enemy. [passage omitted]

The hollow claims made by Shamir, Rabin, Sharon, and others about their eternal stay in our occupied Palestinian territory are only part of the psychological war that deceives and frightens no one. They are signs of weakness, perplexity, and confusion. The circle is closing around the enemy from all sides. [passage omitted]

Men of the Unified National Command, blessed heroes of the popular committees, strike forces: Victory requires no more than an hour of patience. We have achieved much; very little remains. We are in the last quarter hour of our suffering. More unity! Unity! More cohesion! Cohesion! More closing of ranks! More organization! Organization! More rising above wounds and trivialities! Let us cast away all negative acts as much as we can. Every act has its negative aspects.

I urge patience. I urge you to show more love and harmony toward each other, and more self-denial and altruism. Let us consolidate even further the authority of the people, of the masses, and of the revolution, but without excessiveness or domination, only with revolutionary fraternity, nobility, and love. Our steadfastness is our weapon for eternity. With solid unity we will attain victory.

Our popular revolutionary committees; our Unified Command, with all its institutions and cadres; our heroes and striking cadres and groups: Your responsibility is difficult and great. Our masses trust you, your wisdom and manliness. Let there be formed in every village, camp, or town a committee of our best people to solve any problems that may arise among members of our people. Let there be more committees specializing in economy, revolutionary discipline, popular education, medicine, agriculture, and social affairs, so as to replace the authority of the enemy, whose sun today is setting and tomorrow will fade out completely.

Let there be greater unity. Let there be greater unity among all of us within the melting-pot of the revolution, the melting-pot of the PLO, starting with Hamad through Fatah, the Popular Front, the Democratic Front, Jihad, Al- Arabiyah, the Palestine Liberation Front, the Communists, and Al-Nidal, and finally to all the mass cadres, organizations, and institutions, all standing in one solid line, forcing their way toward victory, toward our independent state, and toward our holy capital Jerusalem.

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. God loves those who fight his cause in a single rank, like a solid edifice. Verily, Almighty God has spoken the truth!

Brothers and beloved: As we have frustrated the enemy's military designs against the intifadah in our beloved land of Palestine and have frustrated his hopes and those of his agents in their efforts to destroy the Palestinian gun in southern Lebanon, today we will be able—with the same determination, willpower, faith, and confrontation—to frustrate the enemy's political counteroffensive and his designs to circumvent or destroy the intifadah through the so-called autonomous rule, local elections, and stages.

Heroes of the blessed intifadah! Our struggling masses! Our revolutions in all places of revolution and confrontation! With the entry of our blessed intifadah into its 16th month, our Zionist enemy embarks upon the countdown and its inevitable retraction and retreat from our land and our rights. Our heroic people continue to register more victories on the national and international levels. [passage omitted]

Victory is coming! Dawn is coming! Our state, the State of Palestine, is so close. Our Jerusalem is only a stone's throw away. [passage omitted]

Revolution until victory!

Your brother, Yasir 'Arafat—Abu 'Ammar.

OPEC Affairs

OPEC, Non-OPEC Oil Ministers To Meet 31 Mar

LD2103073589 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 0712 GMT 21 Mar 89

[Text] Kuwait, 21 Mar (KUNA)—A senior Gulf source announced that a joint meeting, to include the 13 OPEC oil ministers and the oil ministers (or their representatives) from 11 oil-producing non-opec members, will be held in Vienna on the 31st of this month.

The source told KUNA that the purpose of the joint meeting is to discuss means to consolidate the international oil markets and oil prices so that they reach the desired level of $18 per barrel in the coming months.

OPEC's Secretary General on Output Quotas

PM1403155089 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 11 Mar 89 p 10

[Interview with OPEC Secretary General Dr Subroto by Muhammad al-Tunsi in Vienna—date not given]

[Text] [Al-Tunsi] The market has responded to the decision by some non-OPEC member states to cut a proportion of their production or exports, but your sole response has been your acceptance of it. How do you explain this?

[Subroto] We not only accept it but welcome it as a major cooperation measure on the non-OPEC producers' part. In fact, the decision by six states to reduce their exports eases the market by 2.4 million [as published] barrels per day [bpd], and we are still awaiting news from China and Malaysia (an hour after the interview China announced its decision to cut its output—AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT editor's note). If that happens, and both

China and Malaysia cut their output by 5 percent, the figure will be 288,000 [as published] bpd. I feel that the measure is extremely important. In fact, it has a greater psychological and political significance.

[Al-Tunsi] How will OPEC members respond to such a reduction?

[Subroto] OPEC is not expected to take any measures in response. This is because OPEC actually fulfilled its duty through last November's agreement when we reduced our output to 18.5 million bpd, which is enough, in my view.

[Al-Tunsi] Does that mean that you insist that the step taken by non-OPEC member states must remain unconditional?

[Subroto] Yes, and also a unilateral measure that has nothing to do with anything we have, because, as I said, we have in fact fulfilled our duty. I explained our position clearly during the discussions in London. We explained that their reductions must be unconditional.

[Al-Tunsi] What about the possibility of holding a meeting between OPEC members and non-members on 31 March, as reported?

[Subroto] We have not yet set 31 March as a date: It is mere speculation.

[Al-Tunsi] Does this mean that you are not ready to meet with them?

[Subroto] Not at all. We welcome a meeting with them. I have already said that it was likely that we would meet with them before, during, or after March. There will indeed be a meeting, but a date and a venue must be set. I assure you, OPEC members are willing and have the desire to hold such a meeting because it is bound to give the market a psychological and political boost. I repeat that we are ready for it if they are ready.

[Al-Tunsi] What would you like to tell the market about your two ministerial committees' meeting on 29 March?

[Subroto] I cannot overtake events. All I can say is that the OPEC ministerial control committee—which comprises eight OPEC members, namely, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iraq, Iran, Venezuela, Indonesia, Nigeria, and Algeria—will discuss a number of issues, including the follow-up of the member states' commitment to quotas as well as monitoring and studying price trends to establish a target price of $18 a barrel.

[Al-Tunsi] Will you discuss permanent quotas for member states?

[Subroto] Yes, the committee will discuss this. It also has the power to discuss long-term strategy.

[Al-Tunsi] The general OPEC conference entrusted the ministers of six OPEC member states with making contacts with non-OPEC producer states. If a date and venue are set for the meeting, will the other OPEC members be invited to it?

[Subroto] If a meeting takes place with ministers from non-OPEC states, it is the six members which are charged with making contacts and holding talks with them.

[Al-Tunsi] Dr Subroto, the OPEC crude production ceiling is still higher than that agreed on in November, inasmuch as there are excesses on the part of some member states. Why is this happening?

[Subroto] One thing must be made clear, namely, that when we talk about the quota, we mean that stipulated in the November agreement, that is, total local consumption plus net exports minus the quantities withdrawn from the stockpile.

The figure mentioned in connection with the price refers to the output from the oilwells. According to the definition of the quota, I believe that that output often exceeds total local consumption, net exports, and amounts withdrawn from the stockpile. This aspect of the process explains why the press and news agencies always think that production exceeds the quota. The second aspect is that we are increasingly adhering to the quota set for the 13 member states, and there are still states which are seeking to change their output.

[Al-Tunsi] Am I to understand from this that you cast doubt on the reports that some states within your organization exceed their output quotas? What if I tell you that there are four particular states which you know are currently exceeding their output quotas?

[Subroto] Do you have any figures on these excesses?

[Al-Tunsi] I cannot remember them now.

[Subroto] It has not been investigated yet.

[Al-Tunsi] When, then?

[Subroto] The OPEC committee which will convene on 13 March will follow it up, and we will examine the figures which it supplies to us. The committee will also examine every member states's output figures. So it is too early to talk about output excesses and we can say no more than what I have told you in this regard.

[Al-Tunsi] How do you expect Iraq and Iran to agree again on an acceptable formula for quotas and output?

[Subroto] They are agreed on the quotas decided for them.

[Al-Tunsi] But matters could change at the 29 March meeting in light of the expected increase in demand during the last two quarters of this year.

[Subroto] It is possible and it will be discussed at the conference.

[Al-Tunsi] Dr Subroto, in light of recent market developments and the results expected from the next meeting, are you still optimistic about OPEC's realizing its target price of $18 a barrel?

[Subroto] Certainly.

[Al-Tunsi] How?

[Subroto] The commodity price has actually now reached $16.30 a barrel, that is, 91-92 percent of the target price of $18 a barrel. When we enter the second half of 1989, demand will be much higher than in the second quarter. Furthermore, demand in the fourth (and last) quarter will be higher than in the third quarter. We will work to achieve two things after the June meeting. The price will rise from $16 to $18 a barrel for the third and fourth quarters of 1989. So the measure we adopt will be double-sided: Either keep the price above $18 by maintaining output quotas, or do not allow the price to remain above $18, thus increasing the output ceiling. However, the meeting will decide this.

Algeria

Religious Ministry on Separating Islam, Politics

LD1803234189 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 2200 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] The Religious Affairs Ministry has issued a statement:

In light of the Islamic Salvation Front statement calling for the opening of offices in the Al-Sunnah Mosque in Bab Elwad and in the Bilhaddad Mosque in Al-Qubbah, the Religious Affairs Ministry points out that the mosque is the house of God. It is built for the purposes of worshipping and glorifying God. Worshippers congregate in these mosques, whatever their sect, in comprehensive Islamic unity. Mosques should not be used for any purpose other than the one for which they were established. They cannot be turned into a headquarters or a center or an office by any organization or society, be it political or nonpolitical, except the religious societies which build them and look after them.

While it calls on the Islamic Salvation Front and other societies to respect the holiness of mosques, a holiness which is incompatible with any kind of political activity, the Religious Affairs Ministry notifies citizens that it is eager to keep the mosques apart from any activity that goes beyond their mission and will use all legal means available to it to prevent this.

Khelef Appointed Maghreb Affairs Secretary

LD2003173489 Algiers APS in Arabic 1415 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Algiers, 20 Mar (APS)—President Chadli Bendjedid today appointed Mr Abdelaziz Khelef as secretary of state for Maghreb affairs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Bendjedid Receives Praise From King Hassan

LD2003104189 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 0638 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] President Chadli Bendjedid yesterday received a message from King Hassan II. The message, which was conveyed by the Moroccan ambassador to Algeria, included praise from the representatives of the Moroccan people and the political and trade-union organizations for President Chadli Bendjedid's work in the Maghreb arena and for his efforts toward realizing the unionist action in the Maghreb.

Egypt

Mubarak Answers Questions on Israel, PLO

NC1903152989 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1339 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] Tabah, 19 Mar (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak has affirmed that Egypt is working for peace and that even before the October War Egypt wanted peace. War was launched not for the purpose of war, but for peace. He said: Since 1973 and until today, we have restored the land and built peace between us and Israel and the Israeli people. This was a response to a question by an Israeli television reporter on the practical lessons of how Egypt regained Tabah. President Mubarak said: I will tell the Israeli people one word if possible. I have spoken in general about Egypt's intention regarding the peace process, the Egyptian people, and their stand on the path of peace. President Mubarak said: If you are talking about amity among people, Israelis come to Egypt as tourists and we welcome them. There is absolutely nothing until the entire issue is resolved. [sentence as received] We must all live in amity, not only Egypt and Israel, but also Israel and Jordan, the Palestinians, the Syrians and all the Arab countries. I believe that all these people, I say this publicly and in all frankness, that everyone wants peace and to coexist peacefully, even with the Israelis.

The Israeli television reporter asked: Including the PLO?

President Mubarak replied: Do not be unfair to the PLO. There are extremists in the PLO but you also have extremists in Israel. Let us be frank. We must appreciate these people; they have no land. When we try to resolve their problem we must not fear anything. We are all human beings. Do you think that a PLO member is made of fire? He is a human being like us. They can live with us and we can live with them. They can cooperate with me and you. We can become friends and brothers and everything will be all right.

The Israeli television reporter asked: Does this mean that all parties will talk together and peace will be achieved?

Mubarak said: Why fear an international conference? Why fear that someone might impose a solution on us? No one will impose a solution on us. An international conference, and I say it candidly, is a psychological umbrella and a direct dialogue will start underneath it.

An Israeli television correspondent asked President Mubarak: Does 'Arafat agree to this?

The president said: All of them agree to this. Do not pay any attention to what is being said. We say we can go ahead in this matter. Therefore, let us drop the slogans raised on our side and on your side, because if we go after slogans there will be no peace in the entire area and all of us will be destroyed. Death and destruction will occur everywhere. You will lose and we will lose. Our money will be lost on weapons, killing, hatred, and destruction. All this money can be used to raise the people's standard of living in an atmosphere of love and cooperation. Is there anything better than this? What else do we seek from this but cooperation?

The Israeli television correspondent asked: Does this mean we should negotiate as we negotiated over Tabah, and before that over Sinai?

The president said: Do not be afraid of peace and negotiations, because no one will impose anything on anyone. I tell you and Shamir that peace is very precious and deserves every sacrifice, because peace is love, cooperation, and a quiet life. It is brotherhood. It is everything. What more do you want?

Asked by one of the correspondents what the return of Tabah means, the president said: The return of Tabah is considered a good step toward peace in the Middle East. With its return, we have regained all our territory. This is a good example of peace between nations and cooperation between states. As long as there is life there is hope.

Answering a question from the INA correspondent on the possibility of establishing peace in the Gulf area, President Mubarak said: We hope with all our heart that peace will be established in the Gulf. We are confident that, through President Saddam Husayn's wisdom and the Iraqi people's spirit of goodness and peace, peace will ultimately be achieved. During the European tour, many discussions took place, but what President Saddam Husayn is doing is a broad indication of the Iraqi peace intentions which we hope Iran will respond to, because it also wants peace.

Mubarak on U.S. Visit, Peace Conference

NC2003122889 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1145 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Cairo, 20 Mar (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak has disclosed that he will visit the United States shortly, adding that his talks there will focus on political and economic issues.

This came in remarks the president made in response to questions by newsmen after addressing a joint session of the People's Assembly and the Consultative Council today.

Answering a question on the conditions set by the IMF and whether these are impossible, President Mubarak said: If peace is not impossible, will the IMF conditions be impossible?

In the course of his answer to a number of journalists' questions, President Mubarak said: We accept what we want. I will travel to the United States soon. I was invited before but was busy. However, I have decided to go to the United States for talks with the U.S. Administration after the invitation was repeated.

President Mubarak stressed that there is nothing impossible in the world. Answering a question on the date of the visit, President Mubarak said: It will take place soon. We must wait. Asked about the focus of the visit, and whether it will have a political or economic nature, President Mubarak said: The two matters are linked. We cannot separate them, as some people do, and say "only economics." Politics and economics are linked.

Asked whether the IMF will ease conditions now that the political situation has improved in Egypt, President Mubarak said: Our discussions will be conducted, until the matter is settled, on the basis of the existence of a dialogue and understanding.

Asked what he will request of officials in the U.S. Administration with regard to the Middle East peace process when he meets with them shortly, President Mubarak said: U.S. President George Bush is a friend. I also know Secretary of State James Baker very well.

Mubarak added: We will talk and exchange views. I am sure that the U.S. Administration has an in-depth knowledge of the details and understands all the circumstances. I hope and am confident that it will act, God willing.

Mubarak stressed: We want an international peace conference to convene. I told Israel yesterday: Why are you afraid of an international conference? No one will impose anything on anyone. At the international conference, we all will talk, unless they do not want to solve the issue and leave the land.

President Mubarak warned that there will be a great loss if the issue is not solved soon.

Asked whether Israel will convey new ideas regarding self-rule to the U.S. Administration, President Mubarak said: Let Israel convey what it wants and I will convey what I want. We can reach understanding in the United States on what can and cannot be done.

Asked whether events have overtaken self-rule, as his excellency has reiterated several times, President Mubarak said: Since you yourselves see that events have, in fact, overtaken self-rule, why should I think about it and occupy myself with it again.

Report on Rebuilding of Iraqi Reactor Denied

NC2003080189 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0745 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Cairo, 20 Mar (MENA)—Eng Mahir Abazah, minister of electricity and energy, has denied a Gulf newspaper's report that Egypt and Iraq are currently studying plans for rebuilding the Iraqi nuclear reactor destroyed by Israel in 1981. In a statement today, Minister Abazah said that this subject has not yet been discussed.

The Bahraini newspaper AL-AYYAM, which published the report yesterday, said that this cooperation falls within the framework of a pan-Arab project being studied by nuclear energy experts in Egypt to build experimental nuclear reactors and nuclear power stations in accordance with a joint plan adopted by the Arab Cooperation Council countries.

Eng Abazah added that the construction of experimental nuclear reactors has not yet been discussed, indicating that no decision has been made yet, even on the Egyptian level, regarding the building of nuclear power stations for generating electricity.

Libya

London Paper Says Libyan Behind Pan Am Crash

NC2003070789 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] The SUNDAY EXPRESS, a newspaper published in the United Kingdom, has reported that the person who planned the bombing of the U.S. Boeing plane over Scotland last December is a Libyan explosives expert called "The Professor".

The paper quotes a British security source as saying that the person who carried out the operation had arrived in Bonn on a flight from Athens 1 week before the plane crash. While on board, he met a Lebanese student named Khalid Ja'far and gave him a cassette recorder rigged with explosives.

The paper says that the Libyan was seen in Portugal 3 weeks ago and that he is now hiding in a Middle Eastern country. The SUNDAY EXPRESS believes that the Libyan terrorist is either working for an anti-'Arafat pro-Syrian Palestinian group or is receiving his orders from Khomeyni.

The paper adds that the Libyan was trained by Soviet experts and given the name "The Professor" because of his vast knowledge in the field of explosives and document forging. The Libyan has served in the Libyan army and trained terrorists belonging to the Abu Nidal [Abri al-Banna] group and others in the Irish Republican Army.

Al-Qadhdhafi, Syria's Al-Asad Resume Talks

JN1703154389 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1515 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] In Banghazi, President Hafiz al-Asad this afternoon resumed his talks, which began yesterday, with Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the 1st September Revolution in Libya. The meeting was attended by Vice President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam and Major 'Abd al-Salam Jallud, member of the Libyan Revolution Command.

The talks dealt with developments in the Middle East in light of the current international conditions and moves. They also dealt with the Arab world situation, Arab relations, and pan-Arab plans to confront the Zionist threat and defend the pan-Arab interests of the Arab nation. They also discussed details of certain issues raised during yesterday's meeting.

Col Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi hosted a lunch banquet today in honor of the president. The banquet was attended by the delegation accompanying his excellency and senior officials in the Libyan Jamahiriyah.

Hold Third Meeting

JN1803055289 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0515 GMT 18 Mar

[Text] Banghazi—President Hafiz al-Asad resumed his talks with Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the 1 September revolution in Libya, in a third meeting held in Banghazi last night.

The meeting was attended by Vice President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam and Major 'Abd al-Salam Jallud, member of the Libyan revolution command. The two leaders discussed issues raised during the two previous meetings.

This meeting was preceded by a meeting held last night between Vice President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam and Maj 'Abd al-Salam Jallud.

Al-Asad Departs 18 Mar

LD1803114889 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1105 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Al-Bayan al-Awwal, 18 Mar (JANA)—President Hafiz al-Asad, president of the republic of sisterly Syria, left Banghazi at 1000 today at the end of a 3-day visit to the great Jamahiriyah.

An official send-off ceremony, led by the brother leader of the revolution, was organized for President Hafiz al-Asad at Baninah International Airport.

Present at the send-off ceremony was Staff Maj Abd al-Salam Ahmad Jallud. Also present to see off President Hafiz al-Asad were brother secretaries and members of the general people's committee, secretaries of the people's congresses and committees at Banghazi municipality, and a number of officers of the Libyan Arab Armed Forces.

Basic People's Congresses Debate Maghreb Union

LD1903094989 Tripoli JANA in English 0843 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] Tripoli, Al-Mirrikh 19 [19 March], JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—The masses of the basic people's congresses throughout great Jamahiriyah yesterday began their emergency session to debate the treaty setting up the Arab Maghreb Union which stipulates that it enters into force after ratification by the member states in accordance with the procedures in force in each country.

The masses of the basic people's congresses began enthusiastically and earnestly the debate of the provisions of the treaty on the basis of the unionist orientations of the Libyan Arab people and its earnest and continuous efforts to realise any unionist action among the Arab countries towards the realisation of the total unity from the ocean to the Gulf.

The masses asserted in thier conscious debate that the setting up of the Arab Maghreb Union was an advanced step along the path of the realisation of the total unity of the Arab nation.

Resume 'Emergency Sessions'

LD2103103789 Tripoli JANA in English 0850 GMT 21 Mar 89

[Text] Tripoli, March 21, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—The basic people's congresses in all regions of great Jamahiriyah resumed for the third consecutive day yesterday their emergency sessions to debate the treaty of the Arab Maghreb Union in accordance with Article 19 of the treaty which states that the treaty comes to force [word indistinct] ratification as the member countries according to each country's procedure.

The masses debated the articles of the treaty guided by the unity drives of the Libyan Arab people and its firm, solid belief in the need to achieve Arab unity.

The basic people's congresses hailed the pioneering role of the leader to achieve pan-Arab unity in order to give the Arab nation its place among nations and defeat its imperialist and Zionist enemies, confirming that the Arab Maghreb Union was a step forward on the road to pan-Arab unity.

Morocco

King Hassan Receives Belgian Foreign Minister

LD2003183789 Rabat Domestic Service in Arabic 1600 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Excerpt] This afternoon at the Royal Palace in Marrakech, His Majesty Hassan II received Leo Tindemans, Belgian minister of foreign affairs, and the delegation accompanying him. [passage omitted]

Economic Cooperation Accord Signed With FRG

LD2003133789 Rabat MAP in Engish 1212 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Fes, March 20, MAP—West German Federal Minister of Economic Cooperation Hans Klein left here Sunday at the end of a few days visit to Morocco heading for Algeria as part of a tour that already led him to [words indistinct] wind up by a visit to Tunisia.

Klein held talks during his stay in Morocco with Moroccan officials including Prime Minister Azeddine Laraki, Minister of Finance Mohamed Berrada with whom he signed a cooperation agreement in financial fields for 1989, under which Morocco will receive loans worth 65 million Deutch marks to finance several development projects.

The loans, which will be alloted to Morocco by the West German Institute for Reconstruction (KFW), will namely finance irrigation, dry farming (in the regions of Hadcourt and Ouezzane) and drinking water (Ben Ahmed) projects. The loans are to be reimbursed with a 0.75 percent interest rate over a 30 year period and a ten year period of grace.

The accord also provides for another programme, projects concerning drinking water utilities in Guelmin, other towns and 25 villages.

The West German minister also visited with Minister of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform Othman Demnati several projects contributed to by West Germany namely in the Ghrab region and the Loukkos River basin, north west of Morocco.

Sudan

Constituent Assembly Postpones Meeting

NC2003173989 Cairo MENA in English 1654 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Khartoum, March 20 (MENA)—The Constituent Assembly, under the chairmanship of Muhammad Yusuf Muhammad, postponed its sessions this week and decided to resume meetings on Monday to complete consultations on the formation of the new government which was due to be announced today or tomorrow. The speech that was due to be delivered by Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, prime minister, before the Constituent Assembly on Wednesday was also deferred.

A Sudanese source said that the Constituent Assembly may resume meetings before Monday in the case of new developments on the Sudanese arena.

Meanwhile, Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, chief of the Al-Ummah Party, and Muhammad 'Uthman al-Mirghani, chief of the Democratic Unionist Party, held their second meeting today to discuss removal of obstacles impeding the distribution of some ministerial portofolios in the new government. The meeting was attended by the six-man committee jointly formed by the Al-Ummah and the Democratic Unionist Parties.

Observers see that this meeting acquires special importance as it is expected to define the form of the government and to distribute portfolios.

The first meeting between Al-Mahdi and Al-Mirghani was held last Sunday at the residence of Al-Mirghani.

Al-Mahdi, Al-Mirghani Agree on Government

EA2103121489 Khartoum SUNA in English 1035 GMT 21 Mar 89

[Text] Khartoum, 21st March SUNA—Premier Sadiq al-Mahdi and leader of the Democratic Unionist Party, DUP, Muhammad Uthman al-Mirghani, had reached, after a prolonged meeting held here yesterday, an agreement on forming a new broad-based government. A statement to this effect was issued following some hours of continued debate. The statement said the meeting reviewed the outcome of the efforts made towards the formation of the new government in an atmosphere of frankness and seriousness. The statement underlined that the prime minister will tomorrow, Wednesday, hold a press conference in which he will announce his government. The new ministers will take the oath, on the same day, before the Supreme Council.

Following the two leaders' meeting of last night, Ummah Politburo member Abd al-Rahman Nuqdallah reaffirmed that the trade unions along with the southern parties will be represented in the upcoming government.

Decide on Cabinet Portfolios

PM2103122689 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 20 Mar 89 pp 1, 2

[Unattributed report: "Al-Mahdi and Al-Mirghani Agree on Distribution of Cabinet Portfolios to Various Parties"]

[Excerpt] Khartoum, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT bureau—At a meeting yesterday morning, Al-Ummah Party Leader and Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi and Democratic Unionist Party [DUP] leader Muhammad 'Uthman al-Mirghani were able to surmount the main obstacle which has prevented the allocation of cabinet portfolios. All that remains now is to name the people who will occupy the ministerial posts. The two sides hope to iron out the differences which emerged over certain ministerial candidates from both parties.

During their meeting, held in the wake of the cabinet portfolios selection crisis, particularly in relation to the Interior Ministry, Al-Mahdi and Al-Mirghani agreed on the final distribution of portfolios which will give the Al-Ummah Party the following seven ministries: The Interior Ministry, the attorney general's post, the Justice Ministry, the Housing Ministry, the Presidential Affairs Ministry, the Energy and Mining Ministry, and the Education Ministry.

The DUP will have the five ministries of Foreign Affairs, Finance and Planning, Culture and Information, Industry, and Evacuees.

Representatives of the southern parties will have the four ministries of Regional Government, Irrigation, Youth and Sports, and Transport and Communications. The emergent forces (unions and federations) will have the Agriculture and Labor ministries. The Livestock Resources and Public Services Ministries will go to independents, and the Health Ministry will be given to a representative of the leftist forces.

It was also agreed that the defense portfolio will be given to a retired officer after consultation with the supreme military command. [passage omitted]

Government To Be Announced 22 Mar

NC2103141689 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1347 GMT 21 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Khartoum, 21 Mar (MENA)—Well-informed sources have told a MENA correspondent in Khartoum that Sudanese Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi will conclude consultations on the formation of a new expanded government today. The new government—to include members and non-members of the Constituent Assembly—will be announced tomorrow morning, Wednesday, at a press conference which Al-Mahdi will hold at the cabinet offices for that purpose.

Our correspondent has learned that Al-Mahdi will present the government statement and program of action in the Constituent Assembly on Monday morning [27 March]. [passage omitted]

Tunisia

Foreign Minister Views Domestic, Area Issues

PM2003101289 Jeddah 'UKAZ in Arabic 14 Mar 89 p 16

[Interview with Foreign Minister Abdelhamid Escheikh by Ahmad Basadrah; date and place not given]

[Text] [Basadrah] Your Excellency, Minister, 7 November constituted a historic psychological change for the Tunisian people: There have been changes that have opened new doors to democracy, such as party pluralism and freedom of the press. Can you describe the nature and characteristics of the advances made in your country?

[Escheikh] True, 7 November did represent a transformation in the Tunisian citizen's life, since it restored importance to the Tunisian citizen, that is, in terms of his Arab and Islamic identity.

As for the situation in Tunisia, it was unstable before that date as a result of President Bourguiba's senility and his inability to carry out his duties as head of state. The Tunisian citizen's religious identity was affected as a result. This is why 7 November embodied and manifested religious awareness and linked Tunisians as individuals with their civilization and spiritual values. This was combined with numerous measures to serve the Tunisian people. Perhaps you will agree with me that some of the previous measures, without damaging the essence, did cause some people to express doubts about Islam in Tunisia. This is why the new era restored the religion to its proper status in the hearts of the Muslim Tunisian people who are devoted to their faith. It has restored to the Tunisian people their civilization, Arabism, and pan-Arab affiliation and enabled them to interact properly with all the developments in Arab affairs. In our plans, we have focused on two steps: first, self-reconciliation; second, clearing the atmosphere in Tunisian foreign relations.

[Basadrah] Your Excellency, Minister, what about party pluralism and the prospects for the development of party activity in the country?

[Escheikh] Many steps have been taken since 7 November, including the establishment of democracy. But we want a responsible democracy. We must not confuse democracy with chaos. Freedom of expression and party pluralism are guaranteed, but within rules that strengthen democracy, so that we can introduce a trailblazing experiment in that field. There are now seven parties in Tunisia and, if we had left the door open, the number would have increased.

We have a large number of daily and weekly newspapers and magazines—a practical demonstration of freedom of expression in Tunisia. Such organs do not have to agree with the government. There are no controls on them. In my view, this is a a mature political process which Tunisia has achieved through experience, and we must invest in it effectively to serve the people.

[Basadrah] Your Excellency, Minister, you said that only seven parties have been allowed, but that you expect more parties to be formed. Do you not consider that limitation an obstacle to the other political forces wanting to form their own parties?

[Escheikh] We welcome any new group that has a program clearly different from those of the other parties. At present, the number of parties we have is seven, each with a different program. Any political group whose political philosophy differs from the others' will be officially allowed to work within the framework of party pluralism in Tunisia.

[Basadrah] How would you assess Saudi-Tunisian relations, especially following 7 November? How can they be exploited effectively on the pan-Arab level?

[Escheikh] We in Tunisia have always been proud of our relations with the Kingdom. And these relations have undoubtedly assumed new dimensions since 7 November. The best proof of this is that His Excellency President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali's first foreign visit was to the Kingdom. That visit represented a practical step toward developing and intensifying fraternal relations between the two countries. President Zine El Abidine and the custodian of the two holy mosques have met several times in several countries. There has always been agreement and understanding on numerous bilateral and Arab issues.

Saudi-Tunisian relations are very special and will witness considerable development in the coming years by virtue of the special relations between the two leaders, King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz and President Zine El Abidine.

[Basadrah] Now that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has recognized the mujahidin government, does Tunisia intend to recognize it?

[Escheikh] Tunisia will cause no delay to any Islamic action that serves Islamic causes. [Escheikh ends]

The minister has praised the Kingdom's recognition of that government, and said that the Kingdom's assessment and decision in this regard is sound and correct and that "we in Tunis are considering the matter and will probably adopt a position on the issue."

[Basadrah] As you know, the Palestinian issue has witnessed various developments, including the U.S.-Palestinian dialogue in Tunis. How do you view these events?

[Escheikh] The Palestinian cause is the prime Arab cause. Tunisia is one of the states committed to the principle that the PLO is the Palestinian people's sole legitimate representative. We respect the Palestinian brothers' decisions. We support, back, and work to implement whatever decision the PLO makes. The Palestinians have decided to initiate a dialogue with the United States and we support them and back whatever serves their national interests.

[Basadrah] Your Excellency, Minister, most Arab states have restored relations with the Arab Republic of Egypt following the Amman conference and conditions are now right for Egypt's return to the [Arab] League. However, there have been reports that Egypt has made its return to the League conditional on the League's transfer back to Cairo. What is the truth about these matters and what is your view?

[Escheikh] First of all, I have not heard that Egypt has requested that. Besides, bilateral relations between Egypt and Tunisia are good, and we are working together to extend and develop these relations. As for the second part of the question, Tunisia does not at all oppose Egypt's return to the Arab League—that is, if there is Arab consensus on this—either by moving the League or by readmitting Egypt.

[Basadrah] How would you assess the recent steps toward establishing the union of the greater Arab Maghreb, and how will it affect the economic relations between those states?

[Escheikh] Cooperation among the Arab Maghreb states is important, and we must cooperate in all fields. This is stipulated in the Arab Maghreb union treaty. These efforts will undoubtedly reflect positively on the economic aspect in particular, because it the crucial test of our efforts and activities in that direction. [Escheikh ends]

Abdelhamid Escheikh added that the years ahead will witness stronger cooperation among those states with a view to accomplishing most of the tasks facing the Maghreb union, God willing.

[Basadrah] The Soviet foreign minister visited the region recently and reports indicated that he brought with him new ideas to boost the peace process in the region. In your view, and in the light of the new changes in Soviet policy, what is the role required of the Soviet Union now?

[Escheikh] In view of the new changes, the Soviet Union's policy has earned the admiration of many of the world's states, which consider that new opening up of Soviet policy—which will in turn help create a new phase of cooperation between all the states and the Soviet Union. This is bound to help resolve many international problem, including the Palestinian problem.

Human Resources Committee With Libya Meets

LD1803204489 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] The Tunisian-Libyan subcommittee for human resources concluded its proceedings in Tunis today and signed the minutes of their meetings. The committee recommended the formation of a working team to agree on concepts and terms, and to conduct surveys on vocations and economic activities while taking into account the specific characteristics of the two countries.

The two sides also agreed that, in late May four Libyan experts would take part in the survey of the population and employment to be conducted in Tunisia then. The two sides also agreed to set up a working group to prepare a study of the training systems in the two countries and to work out a common strategy in this field. This working team is expected to meet in Tunis before the end of June. The committee also examined the possibility of conducting a comprehensive survey of the opportunities available in vocational training.

President Grants Amnesty to Prisoners

LD1903133689 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 2300 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] At noon today, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali had a meeting at the Republican Palace in Carthage with Justice Minister Dr Hamed Karoui, Minister of Interior Chedli Neffati, and Ahmed Siqtari, the director general of prisons at the Interior Ministry.

The meeting concerned the amnesty and conditional discharge which the president has authorized for a number of convicted prisoners to mark the 33d anniversary of independence.

Of these, 1,246 people convicted of disturbing public order were pardoned and 288 conditionally discharged.

In addition, it was decided that proceedings would be halted in connection with 35 of those committed for trial in the case of the security group.

In applying these measures to those charged since 7 November 1987, 9,696 will be pardoned, 1,546 will be conditionally discharged, and 4,767 will have their rights restored.

Kuwait

Defense Minister Comments on Mideast Issues
LD2103100689 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 0737 GMT 21 Mar 89

[Text] Kuwait, 21 Mar (KUNA)—Kuwaiti Defense Minister Shaykh Nawwaf al-Ahmad has called upon Arabs to revive the Arab Charter of Mutual Defense, to rally their ranks, and to form an effective political, economic, and military force able to meet the challenges. Shaykh Nawwaf asserted in an interview published by the Kuwaiti daily AL-WATAN today, the need to remove marginal Arab differences and to work to rallying their ranks and concentrate on their unity in order to gain world respect.

The Kuwaiti minister welcomed the creation of the Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) and the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), which were set up among some Arab countries recently, and expressed his conviction that this will be a step toward the creation of a comprehensive, unitary Arab system.

Shaykh Nawwaf called for a study of possibilities to establish an Arab defense council, which will contribute to the power of the Arabs and to their comprehensive unity, through consultations between Arab countries.

Shaykh Nawwaf al-Ahmad described the situation in the Gulf region as unpromising because of what he described as stagnation in the negotiations between Iraq and Iran to reach a settlement after a fierce 8-year war.

He expressed the conviction that UN Security Council Resolution 598 to end the war between the two countries constitutes a basis for a just and comprehensive settlement between the two countries and in the whole region.

The minister called for speed in concluding a peace treaty between all the countries of the region and for a new era in order to remove tension.

On the other hand, the Kuwaiti defense minister appealed to the Lebanese sides to respond to the six-man Arab committee, which is chaired by the Kuwaiti deputy prime minister and foreign minister, Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir, and to exploit the available opportunities to establish a political settlement in Lebanon.

Shaykh Nawwaf al-Ahmad revealed that a reserve brigade of conscripts is to be formed. He said that the ministry has completed a study on forming this brigade, but there are administrative details for the project which need to be implemented, in addition to the fact that buildings, and military and technical equipment are required.

The minister said that the ministry is continuing its plan to change the period of study at the military academy to 3 and ½ years as from next year. He pointed out that the ministry is currently studying the possibility of establishing military post-graduate studies inside Kuwait so that Kuwaiti officers can obtain staff degrees.

Concerning Kuwaiti arms purchase, Shaykh Nawwaf pointed out that Kuwait always receives offers to buy weapons from the big industrial countries, but Kuwait always chooses what is suitable for its requirements under the circumstances and whenever the situation warrants.

Concerning his expected foreign visits in response to the invitations of his opposite numbers in other countries, Shaykh Nawwaf said that he had a special idea of this matter, but he expressed pleasure in visiting Egypt, however he stressed that the time for this visit is not right yet, and that its date has still no been fixed.

PDRY

Iraqi Oil Minister Meets With Prime Minister
JN1603105589 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 0400 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Last night, People's Democratic Republic of Yemen [PDRY] Prime Minister Dr Yasin Sa'id N'uman received Oil Minister 'Islam 'Abd al-Rahim, currently visiting Aden. They reviewed relations of cooperation between the two countries in a way that will serve both their joint interests and aspects of bilateral cooperation. They also discussed a number of issues of mutual interest.

Earlier yesterday, Salih Abu Bakr ibn Husaynun, PDRY deputy prime minister and minister of energy and minerals, discussed with him relations of cooperation between the two countries in the field of oil.

Confers With Al-'Attas
EA1803070289 Aden Domestic Service in Arabic 1900 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Excerpts] This afternoon Brother Haydar Abu Bakr al-'Attas, member of the Political Bureau and chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme People's Council, received Brother Isam 'Abd al-Rahim al-Jalabi, the Iraqi oil minister, who is visiting Democratic Yemen.

The brother minister conveyed to the brother chairman greetings from his brother, the Iraqi president, Saddam Husayn. The Iraqi minister gave him and Brother Salih Abu Bakr ibn Husaynun, member of the Central Committee, deputy prime minister, and minister of energy and minerals, a detailed account of the results of bilateral discussions in the petroleum field and matters agreed upon in the field of bilateral cooperation. [passage omitted] He pointed out that Iraq was eager to develop relations with our country in the field of oil and to train a number of Yemeni cadres who will operate oil installations.

Brother al-'Attas stressed the importance of developing Iraqi-Yemeni relations in numerous fields in a manner that serves the interests of the two brotherly peoples, develops joint Arab cooperation and action, and increases the capabilities and status of the peoples of our Arab nation. [passage omitted]

Oil Agreement Signed

EA1903065689 Aden Domestic Service in Arabic 2030 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Minutes of a meeting were signed today at the Ministry of Energy and Minerals with the Iraqi Oil Ministry. They were signed on behalf of the Yemeni side by Brother Salih Abu Bakr ibn Husaynun, member of the Central Committee, deputy prime minister, and minister of energy and minerals, and for Iraq by Brother 'Isam 'Abd al-Rahim al-Jalabi, Iraqi oil minister.

The minutes of the meeting cover the development and training of Yemeni cadres at Iraqi institutes and oil installations, as well as exchange of experiences in the oil industry between the two countries and visits by experts and technicians from the two ministries. The minutes of the meeting also covered an increase in the amount of Iraqi oil to be refined at the Aden refinery.

United Arab Emirates

PRC's Vice Premier Tian Jiyun Arrives 16 Mar

JN1603183889 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1749 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 16 Mar (WAKH)—Tian Jiyun, vice premier of the PRC, arrived in Abu Dhabi this evening, heading an official delegation on a 4-day visit to the United Arab Emirates [UAE] in the course of a regional tour.

The Chinese official was greeted on his arrival by Shaykh Hamdan ibn Muhammad Al Nuhayyan, UAE deputy prime minister.

In an arrival statement, he said his visit is to step up economic cooperation between the PRC and UAE. He will also exchange views with UAE officials on bilateral ties and major international issues of common interest. His talks, emphasized the Chinese official, will further develop bilateral relations.

Sees 'Ruler's Representative'

JN1703112089 Abu Dhabi Domestic Service in Arabic 0930 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Shaykh Tahnun ibn Muhammad Al Nuhayyan, the ruler's representative in the eastern region, received in his palace at Al-'Ayn this morning Tian Jiyun, vice premier of the PRC, and his delegation currently visiting the country.

At the beginning of the meeting, Shaykh Tahnun ibn Muhammad ibn Al Nuhayyan welcomed the Chinese official and his delegation to the city of Al-'Ayn. He praised the growth of relations of friendship and cooperation between the United Arab Emirates and the PRC through the exchange of visits by officials in the two countries and discussion of means of promoting bilateral relations in all fields. [passage omitted]

Official Talks Held

JN1803111289 Abu Dhabi Domestic Service in Arabic 0930 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] An official session of talks between a delegation from the United Arab Emirates [UAE] and a PRC delegation was held this morning at the Presidency. The UAE delegation was headed by His Highness Shaykh Hamdan ibn Muhammad Al Nuhayyan, deputy prime minister. The Chinese delegation was headed by Vice Premier Tian Jiyun, who is currently visiting the country.

On the UAE side, the talks were attended by Sa'id al-Ghayth, minister of state for cabinet affairs; Rashid 'Abdallah, minister of state for foreign afffairs; and Sayf al-Jarwan, minister of economy and trade. On the PRC side, the talks were attended by the delegation accompanying the vice premier and the Chinese ambassador to the state .

At the beginning of the session, Shaykh Hamdan welcomed the Chinese official and his delegation, wishing them success during the visit to bolster and promote relations between the two countries. He praised relations of friendship between the two friendly countries and the Chinese support for Arab issues, especially the Palestine question. He expressed hope that this visit will promote relations of cooperation between the two countries in all fields.

The Chinese official paid tribute to the relations of friendship between the two countries and expressed hope that these relations will be promoted to cover all fields, especially the economic and commercial fields, and that the ties between the two countries will develop in the interest of the two friendly people. He paid tribute to the cultural, constructional, and agricultural development in the country under the wise leadership of His Highness Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan, president of the state. The Chinese official extended an invitation to His Highness Shaykh Hamdan ibn Muhammad Al Nuhayyan to visit China. His highness accepted the invitation; the time of the visit will be fixed later.

After the session, Tian Jiyun said the two sides discussed relations between the two countries, especially in the fields of economy and commerce, and ways to bolster and promote them. The possibility of expanding this cooperation to cover the field of investment was discussed, he explained. He added that a number of current international issues of common concern were also discussed.

Rashid 'Abdallah, minister of state for foreign affairs, said that bilateral relations, especially in the field of economy, were discussed. Shaykh Hamdan, he said, expressed the desire of the UAE to increase cooperation and develop economic relations with the PRC. The head of the Chinese delegation expressed a similar desire, he said. The minister added: The two sides discussed the situation in the region and the efforts of both the UAE and the PRC to stabilize peace in the region. They discussed the convening of the international peace conference on the Middle East and the attainment by the Palestinian people of their right to self-determination. He added that a number of international issues and cooperation for world peace were also discussed. At the end of the session, Shaykh Hamdan and the Chinese official exchanged mementos.

Delivers Message to President

JN1803190189 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1710 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 18 Mar (WAKH)—His Highness Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan, president of the United Arab Emirates [UAE], has received a written message from PRC President Yang Shangkun. The message includes an invitation to his highness to make an official visit to the PRC.

The message was conveyed by Tian Jiyun, vice premier of the PRC, during his meeting with his highness here today.

During the meeting, they reviewed bilateral cooperation and means to develop it in all fields, in addition to a number of international issues of interest to both sides.

Meets With Defense Minister

JN1903132589 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1120 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Excerpts] Dubayy, 19 Mar (WAKH)—Today, Shaykh Muhammad ibn Rashid al-Maktum, United Arab Emirates [UAE] minister of defense, received Chinese Vice Premier Tian Jiyun.

They discussed various aspects of cooperation between the UAE and the PRC. They reviewed the possibilities before the two countries to build a basis for joint cooperation in the industrial, agricultural, and trade fields while giving priority to joint investments in these fields.

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Rashid al-Maktum welcomed the development of joint cooperation between the UAE and the PRC. Building bridges between the two countries contributes toward developing the trade and economic relations between them in favor of their joint interests.

He indicated the UAE's readiness in general, and Dubai's in particular, to hold more direct contacts between the officials in the two countries to find more comprehensive and wide-scale opportunities for cooperation between them on the grounds that they can reap the results of this cooperation in a balanced way that guarantees mutual benefit. [passage omitted]

The minister of defense expressed at the end of his meeting with the Chinese official his hope that contacts and mutual visits would continue between the officials in the two countries to achieve the greatest degree of cooperation and understanding between them to entrench and promote bilateral relations in the investment and trade fields.

The PRC official revealed his government's intention to set up a large factory for chemical fertilizers in the region which would be the start of a series of other projects to be discussed in the future. On this issue, he pointed out that, upon his return, his government will send a group of specialized experts in all economic fields to hold further discussions on the studies which have been set to implement this and other projects which would mutually benefit the two countries.

Makes Statement, Departs

JN2003073489 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0529 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Al-Shariqah, 19 Mar (WAKH)—PRC Vice Premier Tian Jiyun left Al-Shariqah this evening heading for home after a 4-day official visit to the United Arab Emirates [UAE] as part of a regional tour. In a statement to WAM, the Chinese official expressed pleasure and satisfaction with the visit. He said the visit was successful and had achieved its objective.

The Chinese vice premier praised the talks he held with UAE President Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan and Deputy Prime Minister Shaykh Hamdan ibn Muhammad. He said the talks dealt with ways to increase and expand cooperation and relations between the two countries, the current developments in the Middle east and issues of common interest.

The Chinese official affirmed that there is a big opportunity for economic cooperation. He added that the details of this cooperation will be announced during the joint committee's meeting in the second part of this year.

Yemen Arab Republic

Salih Receives Message From Saudi Monarch

JN2103062989 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 2000 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Brother Leader and President Colonel 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih has received a message from Saudi King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz of Saudi Arabia, custodian of the two holy mosques. The message deals with relations between the two fraternal countries.

The message was delivered by Dr 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Khuwaytir, minister of education and higher education, during his meeting with the brother leader and president at the Presidential Palace yesterday.

Djibouti President Arrives, Holds Official Talks

JN1903142989 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Excerpts] A session of official talks between our country and the Republic of Djibouti was held at the Presidential Palace in Ta'izz this afternoon. Chairing the session were brothers Colonel 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, president of the Republic, commander in chief of the Armed Forces, and secretary general of the General People's Congress; and His Excellency Hassan Gouled, president of the Republic of Djibouti.

They discussed aspects of fraternal relations between the two sisterly countries as well as the consolidation of joint cooperation fields. They also reviewed and discussed the issues and latest developments in the Arab and international arenas and issues of mutual interest. The two sides affirmed their interest in enhancing the fraternal relations between the two countries and promoting the joint cooperation fields to serve the common interests of both sisterly people and realize the objectives of our Arab nation. Views of both sides were identical on the overall issues discussed. [passage omitted]

His Excellency Hassan Gouled Aptidon, president of the Republic of Djibouti, arrived in Ta'izz at 1230 today leading a delegation on a visit to our country lasting several days. [passage omitted]

His Excellency President Hassan Gouled made a statement to SABA' news agency. He voiced pleasure for this visit to our country. He said that during the visit he will hold talks with his brother president leader and secretary general dealing with the issues and latest developments in the Arab and international arenas and issues of mutual interest as well as the consolidation of bilateral and fraternal relations between both countries and sisterly peoples. [passage omitted]

Meets Privately With Salih

JN1903202489 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 2000 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Brothers President Colonel 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, commander in chief of the Armed Forces, and secretary general of the General People's Congress, and Hassan Gouled, president of the sisterly Republic of Djibouti, currently visiting our country, held a private talk in Ta'izz this evening. They discussed bilateral relations and explored ways to further improve them. They also discussed Arab developments and other issues of common interest. [passage omitted]

Attends 'Final Round,' Departs

JN2003180189 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Excerpt] At 0900 today, a final round of talks was held between our country and sisterly Djibouti, headed by brothers Colonel 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, president of the republic, commander in chief of the Armed Forces, and secretary general of the General People's Congress, and Djibouti President Hassan Gouled. They resumed yesterday's discussion of bilateral, Arab, and international issues. Delegations from both sides attended the session.

President Hassan Gouled left at 1000 today, concluding a brief visit to our country, during which he and President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih looked into ways to further the brotherly ties between the Yemen Arab Republic and Djibouti. The Djibouti head of state was given a large, official sendoff, with President Salih heading the farewell party at the airport. [passage omitted]

Saddam Husayn Receives Yasir 'Arafat 20 Mar

JN2003195789 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1846 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Baghdad, 20 Mar (INA)—His Excellency President Saddam Husayn received Yasir 'Arafat here this evening , chairman of the PLO's Executive Committee.

The two officials reviewed the latest developments in the Palestinian intifadah [uprising] and discussed ways to reinforce it, in addition to discussing Arab affairs in general.

His excellency the president reiterated Iraq's full support for the PLO and the intifadah.

Tariq 'Aziz, deputy prime minister and foreign minister was present at the meeting.

Polish Prime Minister Rakowski Visits

Meets With Ramadan

JN1803135689 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1250 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Baghdad, 18 Mar (INA)—Taha Yasin Ramadan, Revolutiuon Command Council member and first deputy prime minister, received Mieczyslaw Rakowski, chairman of the Polish Council of Ministers, here today.

During the meeting, Ramadan referred to the developing relations between the two friendly countries in various areas, stressing the importance of promoting these relations to an advanced level to lay the groundwork for joint projects, especially in the industrial area. He said that Iraq is serious in expanding its relations with fraternal and friendlly countries in all areas.

The Polish prime minister also expressed his country's deep appreciation of Iraq's policies and its commitment to its obligations and agreements. He said that these policies have deepened international confidence in Iraq. He also stated that Polish-Iraqi relations are based on the principles of sincerity, frankness, and have had success in their long history because they were founded on sound principles and joint and expanded goals.

The meeting was attended by Iraqi Planning Minister Samal Majid Faraj, the Iraqi ambassador to Poland, and the Polish ambassador to Iraq.

Bilateral Relations Discussed

JN1803145489 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1320 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Baghdad, 18 Mar (INA)—Official talks between Iraq and Poland began here at noon today. The Iraqi team was headed by Taha Yasin Ramadan, Revolution Command Council member and first deputy prime minister. The Polish side was headed by Mieczyslaw Rakowski, chairman of the Polish Council of Ministers.

At the beginning of the talks, Ramadan praised the bilateral relations and their steady growth on the basis of equality and mutual interests, stressing that these relations will grow in the future as the two countries are eager to expand them on the sound basis on which they were established.

Taha Yasin Ramadan reviewed Iraq's economic program as well as its cooperation with fraternal and friendly countries in various areas. He also reviewed the outlines of the administrative and economic revolution being led by President Saddam Husayn and its role in investing the available energies to serve development plans in Iraq.

The first deputy prime minister also referred to Iraq's peaceful and positive position on direct negotiations with Iran as well as to the obstacles Iran is placing in the way of the UN-sponsored peace efforts based on Security Council Resolution No. 598—obstacles that prove the Iranian's lack of seriousness in bringing about a just and lasting peace.

The Polish prime minister then expressed his country's satisfaction with the level of its relations with Iraq as well as its desire to expand cooperation between the two countries by creating new areas in which to increase trade exchange and to involve Polish companies and corporations in development projects in Iraq.

The Iraqi delegation to the talks included Planning Minister Samal Majid Faraj and the under secretaries of the Ministry of Industry and Military Industrialization, the Ministry of Finance, and the Ministry of Transport and Communications as well as the Iraqi ambassador in Warsaw. On the Polish side were the under secretaries of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Foreign Economic Cooperation, and the Ministry of Finance, as well as the director of the prime minister's office and the Polish ambassador in Baghdad.

Meets With President

JN1803121089 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1115 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Baghdad, 18 Mar (INA)—This morning, President Saddam Husayn received Mieczyslaw Rakowski, chairman of the Polish Council of Ministers, and his delegation. During the meeting, Rakowski conveyed the greetings of General Wojciech Jaruzelski, chairman of the Polish Council of State, and his wishes of continuous progress and success to the Iraqi people. Discussions were held on the current state of relations between Iraq and Poland and horizons of their development in the interest of both friendly countries.

Rakowski praised the relations between the two countries and noted Poland's readiness to contribute to Iraq's development. He also noted his country's desire to expand cooperation between the two friendly countries, particularly after the cease-fire in the Iraq-Iran war, as this will open new fields for cooperation and strengthening relations based on mutual respect.

President Saddam Husayn asked Rakowski to convey his greetings to Gen Jaruzelski and his wishes of continuous progress and prosperity to the friendly Polish people.

The meeting was attended by Taha Yasin Ramadan, Revolution Command Council member and first deputy prime minister, and the Iraqi ambassador to Poland.

Interviewed on Visit

JN1703202189 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1800 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Interview with Mieczyslaw Rakowski, chairman of the Polish Council of Ministers, by unidentified Baghdad radio and television correspondent in Baghdad on 17 March; questions in Arabic with answers in Polish followed by Arabic translation—recorded]

[Text] [Reporter] Your Excellency, chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Polish People's Republic, can you tell us about your visit to Iraq?

[Rakowski] Certainly, this visit demonstrates the current high level of relations between our countries. Poland was among the first states to recognize Iraq. Our bilateral relations have always been based on mutual respect. For us, Iraq is Poland's most important partner among the developing countries—economically, of course. The Polish contribution to development and construction in Iraq is considerable. Moreover, we have always supported Iraq's policies and the ruling party in Iraq.

Through our long experience, there are several points of agreement on international issues. Exchanging views is a good way to promote political cooperation. The current circumstances in the region, after the cease-fire and the end of war, provide new prospects for cooperation between us.

Finally, we are happy with the long-term cooperation between us. The distance between Poland and Iraq is not as far as it appears on the map. I take the opportunity offered by this television interview to convey the greetings of the city of Warsaw and the Polish people to Baghdad's citizens and to the Iraqi people.

[Reporter] Thank you.

[Rakowski] Thank you.

Holds News Conference

JN2003201389 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1650 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Baghdad, 20 Mar (INA) — Mieczyslaw Rakowski, chairman of the Polish Council of Ministers, declared that Poland deals with Iraq on the basis that it is Poland's first and most important partner in the Arab world.

In a news conference held on his departure from Baghdad this evening, he said that he evaluates the future of Iraqi-Polish relations very positively indeed.

He said: We have agreed to raise the level of joint economic cooperation and to double its volume so that economic cooperation and trade exchange will develop along two parallel lines; the first in the present and the second in longer-term future cooperation.

He added that his visit to Iraq was not a coincidence but stems from the profound relations between the two countries. He said that this visit is the second he has made outside Poland since he became chairman of the Council of Ministers in his country.

Rakowski affirmed that relations between Iraq and Poland will not center on economic relations only but will be enlarged include other fields.

Concludes Visit, Departs

JN2003151389 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1344 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Baghdad, 20 Mar (INA)—Mieczyslaw Rakowski, chairman of the Polish Council of Ministers, left Baghdad for Kuwait this afternoon following a 3-day visit to Iraq. He was seen off by Taha Yasin Ramadan, Revolution Command Council member and first deputy prime minister. During his visit to Baghdad, the chairman of the Polish Council of Ministers held talks with Taha Yasin Ramadan and met with President Saddam Husayn.

Industry Minister Meets With Soviet Official

JN2003201589 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1843 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Baghdad, 20 Mar (INA)—Husayn Kamil Hasan, Iraqi minister of industry and military industrialization, met here today with Leonid Vasil'yevich Zabelin, Soviet deputy minister of the Ministry of Machine Building.

During the meeting, they discussed means of developing cooperation between the two countries in the field of machine building, especially weaving machinery and the transfer of specialized technology.

Iraq has recently agreed with the Soviets on the construction of a number of projects and production lines for weaving and cotton, wool, and silk in Iraq.

Lebanon's Abu Jamrah Arrives in Baghdad

JN2003200489 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1832 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Baghdad, 20 Mar (INA)—Staff Brigadier General 'Isam Abu Jamrah, Lebanese deputy prime minister, minister of economy and trade, and minister of industry and oil, arrived in Baghdad tonight with a delegation on a visit to Iraq of several days. Abu Jamrah told INA that his visit is to consolidate and expand bilateral economic and trade relations. Finance Minister Hikmat 'Umar Mukhaylif and the Lebanese ambassador in Baghdad received him at the airport.

Further on Pakistani Commerce Minister's Visit

Meets With Ramadan 16 Mar

JN1603145589 Baghdad INA in English 1410 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Baghdad, Mar. 16, INA—Mr. Taha Yasin Ramadan, member of the Revolution Command Council and first deputy premier received here today Mr. Faisal Hayat, Pakistani minister of trade and industry and the delegation accompanying him.

During the meeting, Mr. Ramadan stressed importance of intensifying joint effort for expanding relations between the two countries and Iraq's keenness to promote relations with Pakistan.

The Pakistani minister affirmed desire and readiness of Pakistani firms to expand their works in Iraq, implementing new Iraqi development projects and increasing volume of trade exchange.

Later, the Pakistani minister was received by Iraqi Minister of Industry and Military Industrialization Mr Husayn Kamil during which cooperation in drug, medical supplies, textiles and petrochemical industries was discussed.

Leaves Baghdad 17 Mar

JN1703101489 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0835 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Baghdad, 17 Mar (INA)—Faisal Hayat, Pakistani minister of commerce, local government, rural development, and industries, and his delegation left Baghdad this morning, concluding a 3-day visit to Iraq. In a statement to INA, Faisal Hayat lauded the outcome of his visit to Iraq, describing it as successful.

Trade Minister Al-Rawi Leaves for GDR Visit

JN1703110289 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0833 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Baghdad, 17 Mar (INA)—Trade Minister Muhammad Mahdi Salih al-Rawi and a delegation left for Berlin at dawn today on a visit of several days to the GDR. The minister told INA that during the visit he will hold talks with several officials dealing with ways to enhance bilateral economic and trade cooperation. He will also participate in the opening ceremony of the Leipzig international fair.

Minutes of Tanzanian Committee Session Signed

JN1503160489 Baghdad INA in English 1510 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Baghdad, Mar. 16, INA—Iraq and Tanzania signed today minutes of meetings of the 3rd session of the Iraqi-Tanzanian joint committee.

The minutes were signed by Mr. Tahir Muhammad Hassun, Iraqi minister of housing and construction, and Mrs Amina Salem, Tanzanian state minister at the Foreign Ministry.

The minutes stipulated on enhancing trade relations between the two countries, participation in trade fairs, cooperation in solar energy, granting scholarships for Tanzanian students at the Iraqi universities and institutes, activating cultural and youth cooperation, and agreement on holding meetings of the joint commitee at the technical level in the first half of next July in Dar es Salam

President Chairs Council of Ministers Meeting

JN2003154089 Baghdad INA in English 1455 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Textl] Baghdad, Mar. 20, INA—President Saddam Husayn chaired a meeting today for the Ministers Council to discuss a number of economic and commercial issues.

The council discussed in this respect the project of dividing the Iraqi Industrial and Commercial chambers federation into two federations: the first for chambers of commerce and the other for the industrial chambers. It also endorsed the principle of voluntary affiliation to the two federations.

The council discussed the topic of the trade agents and activate their role and lift the barriers that limit the agent to specialize in the trade of specific goods so as to activate commercial activity to serve agricultural and industrial production and to reduce the waste in using manpower and the costs of commercial distribution in general. [sentence as received]

The Ministers Council also discussed the topic of goods and services' prices of the socialist sector within the framework that contributes to increasing production and enhances its quality and reduces its cost and plays a better role in meeting the needs of the local market for goods and services.

The council discussed the regulations and basis adopted to reconstruct the border towns and villages.

RCC Cancels Wartime 'Disciplinary Actions'

JN2103112689 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0930 GMT 21 Mar 89

[Text] Baghdad, 21 Mar (INA)—During its session on 18 March 1989, the Revolution Command Council [RCC] adopted 14 resolutions by which it canceled some disciplinary actions and instructions issued by the ministries. These disciplinary actions and instructions were made necessary by requirements and circumstances of war and restricted citizens' freedom.

The RCC resolutions concern several areas such as the work of retired state employees for foreign companies; the transfer of vehicles ownership; evacuation of houses; and the cessation of pursuing government debts, interest, and taxes regarding the prisoners of war and the missing in action from military personnel and conscripts. The resolutions also dealt with the confiscation of movable and immovable funds of those who tamper with prices; an employee's refusal to obey his superiors' orders; the obligation of the owners of vacant lots in cities to fence them; how to calculate retirement rights of retired personnel as a form of punishment; ownership law; the authority of the traffic police; and contractors' claims against ministries and the institutions in the socialist sector.

During its 7 March session, the Council of Ministers discussed these issues and other restrictions that were necessitated by war circumstances and the citizens' security. The council also submitted a recommendation to the RCC to examine the cancellation of some of the actions and instructions that are no longer necessary in the current circumstances, and gave the ministries 2 weeks to present a statement of their measures pursuant to President Saddam Husayn's order in this regard.

Report Sees No End to 'Uprising' in Near Future

TA2003124189 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 20 Mar 89 p 1

[Report by political correspondent 'Aqiva Eldar]

[Text] The intifadah [uprising] will not come to an end in the near future, and as long as there is no sign of a political solution, talks with Palestinians without the PLO, which has undergone a substantial change, are impossible. This was reported by authorized analysts in a state-of-the-nation assessment presented recently to the senior ministerial level in Jerusalem.

All elements are unanimous in stating that the intifadah serves as a catalyst for all political developments around the Middle Eastern dispute. They believe that the two superpowers recognize their common interest in settling the dispute and will therefore eventually confer and coordinate on the issue.

Expressing their opinion to the political levels, the authorized analysts state that the PLO has undergone a substantial change toward finding a realistic political solution. According to them, the sheer quantity of statements made to this effect by PLO leaders is in itself a real change in this direction. There is no leadership in the territories that is not guided by the PLO. Even the most blatant supporters of the Hashemite regime were silenced by Husayn's firm decision to practically abandon them.

The analysts believe that the community formed by the four Arab countries that signed an economic cooperation agreement constitutes a pragmatic camp whose power in the Arab world is constantly growing. If the political process fails again, however, this community might turn out to be a threatening eastern front, because Iraq would place its huge and well-trained army at its disposition. According to these elements, Israel holds the key to the question of whether this alliance will turn out to be a basis for political and economic cooperation or a basis for hostile military cooperation should Israel reject a political solution. This alliance is currently leaving Syria isolated, but this also makes Syria dangerous, particularly because of a Syrian sense of over-confidence that could lead it to make mistakes.

No Alternative to PLO Seen

TA2103072089 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 21 Mar 89 pp 1, 12

[Report by 'Oz Frankel]

[Text] The PLO has joined the pragmatic Arab camp which seeks a negotiated solution to the Palestinian problem and which accepts Israel's right to exist. There is no alternative to the PLO as a Palestinian partner in peace talks, and Israeli inflexibility might erode Israel's ties with the U.S.

This is the gist of the intelligence community's annual assessment of the national situation, presented last week by the intelligence community to members of the cabinet. One of the participating ministers said that the assessment astonished the ministers because of its close conformity with long-held dovish positions.

The Prime Minister's Office refused last night to react to the intelligence review but Likud sources close to Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir asserted that the annual assessment was leaked "irresponsibly and distortedly". The sources claim that the various reports did not reflect the full scope of the intelligence review. The Likud sources denied direct or implied recommendation by the intelligence experts to open negotiation with the PLO.

Following are the main points of the review, according to one of those present at the meeting:

—No alternative leadership to the PLO exists in the territories. There is no option of negotiations with any Palestinian element without the full consent of the PLO.

—Jordan is acting as though it has forsaken the diplomatic process, and even if it rejoins it in the future, Jordan will not assume a leading role.

—The PLO has moderated its positions concerning the acceptance of Israel's existence, basing its recognition of Israel on the two-state solution. This view, endorsed by 'Arafat and his supporters, is not accepted by all the PLO factions. The accumulation of moderate public statements by the PLO expresses a real change in the organization's policy.

—The intifadah [uprising] could be stopped only in conjunction with a major diplomatic achievement for the Palestinians.

—The pragmatic camp within the Arab world is willing to reconcile with the existence of Israel. Those who still dream of destroying it make the distinction between diplomatic planning, which is based on accepting Israel, and the long-range objective of destruction, which is left to the "end of days."

The diplomatic process is considered as preferable by the majority of Arab states because of the following elements: recognition of the war's price (the cost of maintaining large armies), the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces] strength and the Egyptian precedent of peace-making.

Most of the region's states can no longer finance the arms race. No Arab country, except for Syria, has demanded that Egypt retract from its commitments to Israel in return for the renewal of diplomatic relations.

—The radical camp has weakened. It is composed today only of Syria, Libya and South Yemen. Concepts such as peace, a political settlement, willingness for negotiations

Report Sees No End to 'Uprising' in Near Future

TA2003124189 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 20 Mar 89 p 1

[Report by political correspondent 'Aqiva Eldar]

[Text] The intifadah [uprising] will not come to an end in the near future, and as long as there is no sign of a political solution, talks with Palestinians without the PLO, which has undergone a substantial change, are impossible. This was reported by authorized analysts in a state-of-the-nation assessment presented recently to the senior ministerial level in Jerusalem.

All elements are unanimous in stating that the intifadah serves as a catalyst for all political developments around the Middle Eastern dispute. They believe that the two superpowers recognize their common interest in settling the dispute and will therefore eventually confer and coordinate on the issue.

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The analysts believe that the community formed by the four Arab countries that signed an economic cooperation agreement constitutes a pragmatic camp whose power in the Arab world is constantly growing. If the political process fails again, however, this community might turn out to be a threatening eastern front, because Iraq would place its huge and well-trained army at its disposition. According to these elements, Israel holds the key to the question of whether this alliance will turn out to be a basis for political and economic cooperation or a basis for hostile military cooperation should Israel reject a political solution. This alliance is currently leaving Syria isolated, but this also makes Syria dangerous, particularly because of a Syrian sense of over-confidence that could lead it to make mistakes.

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Most of the region's states can no longer finance the arms race. No Arab country, except for Syria, has demanded that Egypt retract from its commitments to Israel in return for the renewal of diplomatic relations.

—The radical camp has weakened. It is composed today only of Syria, Libya and South Yemen. Concepts such as peace, a political settlement, willingness for negotiations convincing alternative version, and the Likud seems to be in a state of shock at the fact that military intelligence has adopted the position which the Likud has rejected as unthinkable.

Likud sources warned that anybody who entertains the idea that Prime Minister Shamir will one day agree to talks with the PLO simply do not know him. Shamir is prepared to talk about expanding the autonomy plan, about confidence-building measures in the territories, and even about great power or UN auspices for the negotiations, the sources said, but all the rest is pure speculation.

Ben-Aharon Downplays Report

TA2103123089 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 21 Mar 89 p 2

[Report by Hayim Shibi]

[Excerpt] "The report that 'well-qualified analysts' have supposedly reported to the senior governmental level that the uprising in the territories will continue for years unless there is a dialogue with the PLO is untrue." This was said yesterday by Yosef Ben-Aharon, the director general of the Prime Minister's Office, in an interview with YEDI'OT AHARONOT.

Ben-Aharon added that "things were taken out of a report to the Inner Cabinet, which is a violation of the law, and it makes no difference who leaked the report."

When asked whether or not there was such a report, Ben-Aharon said: "I will not speak about the issue of the intelligence report. As to our political assessment, anyone can see that there is a growing support in the world for the PLO as the representative of the Palestinians. For this, one does not need an intelligence report."

Ben-Aharon added that "this does not change the fundamental fact we are trying to convey to the U.S. Administration. Negotiations with the PLO can have only one aim: the establishment of a Palestinian entity west of the Jordan River that would constitute a strategic threat to Israel. We will tell Washington: No negotiations with the PLO and no Palestinian state."

Asked whether the assessment that the uprising will be prolonged is inaccurate, Ben-Aharon said: "It is doubtful whether there is any element at present that is controlling the uprising, and it is doubtful whether 'Arafat can put an end to it now." [passage omitted]

Rabin: Shamir To Present Plans After U.S. Visit

TA2103142489 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1400 GMT 21 Mar 89

[Text] Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin said there will not be peace without a Palestinian partner. Minister Rabin told the Prime Minister's Conference on Jewish Solidarity that, after Prime Minister Shamir's visit to Washington, Israel will put forward proposals to settle the conflict.

Our correspondent Dan Eshel reports that the defense minister stressed that yielding to violence only invites more violence.

Shamir: U.S. Given Proof PLO 'Has Not Changed'

TA2003094589 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0900 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir has said that in his upcoming visit to Washington, he intends to present ideas to advance the peace process and to exchange views with the new administration. He did not elaborate on these ideas, but reiterated that the government is united in its opposition to the establishment of a Palestinian state.

The Palestinians living in the territories west of the Jordan River will have to make do with maximum self-rule as part of an interim settlement. We will have to negotiate with Arab governments and representatives of the Palestinians on the components of that arrangement, he said. Only after this arrangement is operating successfully can we move on to the second stage, in which the permanent status of the territories will be decided.

The prime minister was addressing the steering committee preparing the Prime Minister's Conference on Jewish Solidarity With Israel.

Our correspondent Eytan Almog reports that the prime minister also said that Israel has handed the United States information on the growing cooperation between the various terrorist organizations belonging to the PLO and similar organizations operated by Iran and Syria. Israel also transferred to Washington proof that the PLO has not changed, despite Yasir 'Arafat's declarations.

Mr Shamir stressed that our region is marked by a growing tendency to manufacture and employ chemical weapons. He said that according to Israeli information, Iraqi leaders are convinced that their success in the recent war was due primarily to their use of gas against Iranian civilians. [passage omitted]

Beilin Calls For Conditional Talks With PLO

TA2003072489 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0505 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Telephone interview with Deputy Finance Minister Yosi Beilin by Arye Golan—live]

[Text] [Golan] Deputy Finance Minister Dr Yosi Beilin believes that Israel should conduct direct negotiations with the PLO if it ceases violence. Dr Beilin is now on the telephone. Good morning.

[Beilin] Good morning.

[Golan] You are very, very close to Minister Shim'on Peres, the Labor Party chairman. Does he also support direct negotiations with the PLO under certain conditions?

[Beilin] It is true that I am close to him personally, but it is not correct that I express his positions. For over 12 years I have been expressing views that differ from his, and the time has come for me to receive some credit for that. I did not ask him about this issue. If you want to know, you should ask him.

[Golan] Your proposal does not include Likud agreement. You say that even if the Likud does not agree, we should start a negotiations process with the PLO. You are issuing this call while holding an official government position and only months after your party joined the unity government under Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir.

[Beilin] I am not calling for operational activity that runs counter to the government position. What I am saying is that the Labor Party must have the courage to stand up and say what its members are really thinking: that certain conditions must be presented to the PLO—first and foremost, to cease terrorism and violence—and that if it abides by this commitment, we will talk to it. The entire world has accepted this, and everybody knows there is no alternative to the PLO. Everybody knows that the Jordanian option was killed by the Likud 2 years ago, in April 1987. The time has come to stand up and say: The partner at present is the PLO, if it ends violence. If we do not talk to the PLO, we will meet Hamas [the Islamic Resistance Movement] and Hizballah in a different ball game. These are people who do not even want to talk with us.

What I am saying is that we must understand the picture correctly. We do not have to make it dependent on the Likud's agreement. Anybody who at this point says that we cannot initiate a political move without the Likud's agreement is saying something absurd; such a person is saying that he cannot do anything on his own, that only the Likud can do something. I say: Only the Alignment can do it. We must be the leaders in this move. If the Likud joins us in this and agrees that there is no choice but to talk with the PLO, on the condition that it ceases violence, we will be very happy. If it does not, we must lead the move and convince the public to move in that direction, even without the Likud's agreement. That does not mean that we have to start talks with the PLO tomorrow.

[Golan] But such a move might have little chance of sucess because it would require a wide-ranging national consensus. This is also the view of Labor Party members, as far as is known.

[Beilin] That is perhaps the view of some Labor Party leaders, who, I believe, are making a terrible mistake in this context. I have not seen that the Likud is capable of leading such a move. I am therefore not so optimistic about the chances of reaching a joint agreement. Anybody who today says: We will move toward a political settlement together, is in fact calling for national paralysis. That is why I say that unless we reach an internal party consensus, we will lose the opportunity presented by the change in PLO policy in recent months. We will lose the it once again, just as we have in the past.

[Golan] But the government or coalition might disband over such a proposal. What would happen to the economic rehabilitation program?

[Beilin] I will cry over the dissolution of the coalition.

[Golan] You are saying that cynically. To conclude, I will ask you directly: Are you, Yosi Beilin, prepared to meet with Yasir 'Arafat?

[Beilin] I am not prepared to meet with him. I will not break the law. I have not met with any PLO representatives abroad. I met with PLO members in Israel, because for some reason they are called Palestinians and we are therefore allowed to meet with them. I am not concerned with making some personal, spectacular move. I will operate according to the law, but I believe the time has come to say: Dear friends, the king is naked, instead of going around in circles and saying that we will talk to a Palestinian if he is this and that, without clearly saying what. The time has come, after 22 years, to wake up and say to ourselves and the world that there is no one else at present aside from them, instead of saying that we will never talk with them. With this latter attitude, we are handing the PLO a prize it does not deserve, because if no conditions are imposed, talks are held without conditions. We must impose conditions, which I hope the PLO will accept, and then we will be able to talk with it. The question is not whether I talk with Abu Iyad [Salah Khalaf] or Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat].

[Golan] Thank you, Dr Yosi Beilin.

Ben-Aharon Decries Remarks

TA2003091689 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0800 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] The Prime Minister's Office is working hard so that Yitzhaq Shamir will be able to take ideas for a settlement with him on his upcoming mission to the

United States, Yosi Ben-Aharon, the director general of the Prime Minister's Office, told us this morning. He stressed that this does not involve a formulated plan, because the Americans themselves hinted to Israel that they want to act as mediators. They want to hear ideas, and then work out proposals that will be presented to both sides.

[Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 0505 GMT on 20 March carries a telephone interview with Ben-Aharon by Arye Golan in which Ben-Aharon, asked about U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's remarks on talks with the PLO, says: "Following that incident, and in response to Minister Arens' complaint, Baker's aides told us that these remarks do not reflect his official and basic view on the moves we should take to advance the peace process."]

Ben-Aharon also reacted to Knesset Member Yosi Beilin's remarks, calling them pathetic. Yosi Beilin said yesterday that we should start direct negotiations with the PLO—even without Likud consent—under certain conditions, the most important being that the PLO cease violence. The director general of the Prime Minister's Office denounced these remarks, saying they expressed a minority view that could upset the national unity being formed at the Prime Minister's Conference on Jewish Solidarity opening in Jerusalem.

Labor's Ya'aqobi on Peace Process, PLO

TA2003124089 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Communications Minister Gad Ya'aqobi today presented a program to rehabilitate the Labor Party. At a news conference, Ya'aqobi said he sees himself as a candidate to lead the party and gave his views of basic policy. He was interviewed on this by our correspondent Le'a Zinder:

[Begin recording] [Ya'aqobi] First of all, the Labor Party has to define its plan concerning the future peace process and to say, in a very clear way, that we are ready to negotiate with Palestinians who live in the territories—on the basis of peace for territory—with those who will be ready to negotiate with Israel concerning future peace agreement.

[Zinder] Does this include the PLO?

[Ya'aqobi] Everyone who will be elected and represent the Arabs in the territories, even if he is affiliated with the PLO, has to, and can be a potential partner for the State of Israel. We cannot replace our neighbors, unfortunately perhaps. We have to negotiate with them about the future relations between Israel and the Palestinians who live in the territories.

[Zinder] Do you make these negotiations conditional on any lowering of violence perhaps, such as an end to the intifadah [uprising]?

[Ya'aqobi] Unconditional, totally unconditional, besides the readiness of those people to negotiate with Israel in order to achieve peace relations in the future.

[Zinder] Ya'aqobi stopped short of recommending a separate Palestinian state. Instead, he favors a Palestinian region within a Jordanian confederation.

On internal party affairs Ya'aqobi is recommending a greater democratization of the Labor Party, especially for electing a party leader. He makes no secret of his own personal aspirations. [end recording]

Arens Returns From Visit to U.S.

TA1903194289 Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] Foreign Minister Moshe Arens returned from his U.S. visit early this evening. Upon arrival at Ben-Gurion Airport, Minister Arens immediately left for Jerusalem, without convening a news conference at the airport as customary. Our political correspondent Yig'al Goren has learned that the foreign minister prefers to report first to the prime minister and the Inner Cabinet members on his U.S. trip.

'Danger' Seen in Impression of Break With U.S.

TA2003192689 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1705 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Report by Dan Eshel; Arens' remarks in English]

[Excerpt] [Eshel] [Passage omitted] Foreign Minister Moshe Arens called on the participants in the Prime Minister's Conference on Jewish Solidarity and on world Jewry to demonstrate their solidarity with Israel. The intifadah [uprising] will not destroy Israel, said the foreign minister.

[Arens] But if this series of violent acts brings about political ramifications and creates an impression that maybe Israel is isolated, that it doesn't have the support anymore of the Jewish community in the United States or other Jewish community, that the U.S.-Israeli relationship has been damaged, then mortal danger will be lurking in the shadows for Israel and the Jewish people.

[Eshel translates and continues] The unity and relations between Israel and the United States constitute an important factor in our stability, which some of the nations surrounding us should take into account when drawing up their plans. [passage omitted]

[Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 1700 GMT on 20 March reports on Arens' address before the steering committee of the Jewish solidarity forum in which Arens "recalled that the same chemical weapons that annihilated millions of Jews during the Holocaust can currently be found in the Middle East: Iraq used them against the Kurds, and yet no one said anything about it. By the same logic, the Iraqis or others will not hesitate to direct those weapons against Israel, either."]

Newspaper Terms Arens Visit 'Failure'

TA1703151089 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 17 Mar 89 p B1

[Commentary by Yo'el Marcus: "They Started With a Tango"]

[Text] We have had so many "crises" and "confrontations" with the United States end in a whimper that we would be well advised to contain ourselves before we hasten to describe the current crisis as "the crisis." Nevertheless, one thing is clear beyond any doubt: The visit paid by Arens, the new foreign minister, to the new U.S. Administration, ended in failure.

All this week, we watched his smug expression on television screens, beaming with content over his "excellent talks" with administration and congressional leaders and awestricken by "the friendship and understanding" he found among his interlocutors over the need to work on the peace process "amid full cooperation between the two countries." Moreover, he bragged that the chemistry established with his counterpart was such that they called each other by their nicknames, Jim and Mischa.

Well, despite the fact that he called him Mischa rather than Mr Arens, Baker (pardon me, Jim) had an unpleasant surprise in store: a public statement whose direct and indirect implication is that U.S. policy supports direct negotiations between Israel and PLO representatives.

Baker repeated the same words in different formulations twice, thus proving that the statement had not been taken "out of context" or been a slip of the tongue—as Arens kept up the "everything is all right" pretense—but was a new U.S. position.

Since it is hard to believe that, in his meeting with Arens, Baker (Jim, if you will) did not tell him about the tendency to see the PLO as a possible interlocutor for Israel, doubts arise as to Arens' comprehension and reliability.

Either he did not understand what he was told or he conscientiously misled the public by creating the impression that there had been nothing unsatisfactory in the talks. Although Arens asked Baker not to publicize this position, his excessive satisfaction about the trip's success may have spurred the administration to clarify the situation.

Let there be no doubt in Israel that Shamir's trip to Washington will be no picnic. Either he takes along feasible proposals for a solution of the problem of the inhabitants of the territories, or talks with the PLO will be lurking around the corner.

"The Jewish genius is concocting ideas," the prime minister's friends jokingly said yesterday, referring to Dennis Ross, a likeable Jew on whom many hopes were pinned. He has fulfilled these hopes, and will continue to do so, as a senior official in the State Department playing a prominent role in U.S. policy-making in the region. Behind the joke, however, there was a sense of bitterness and concern.

After all, Shamir has been playing with a terrific hand so far. First of all, they say he was lucky to have the Labor Party—humbled, lacking a clear policy, bogged down in internal disputes, and demoralized—for an opposition and as an obedient subtenant in his Cabinet.

Second, he was said to be lucky to be able to deal with an exhausted and confused administration that has a crowded schedule and no clear plans concerning our region, an administration that is in no hurry and does not exert pressure.

Third, they said that Shamir, in his third term as prime minister, has gained self-confidence and become adept at talking different languages to different audiences: firmly with the national camp, but flexible and yearning for peace when addressing a peace-seeking audience. All this gained him enough time to maintain the status quo, his one and only purpose being to keep holding onto the territories.

If it is true that Shamir was playing a good hand, Baker, by playing the joker, would seem to have brought down Shamir's house of cards that was built on the premise that, despite the pressure of world public opinion, the current situation can be sustained by relying on the excuse that there is nobody with whom to talk.

The position voiced by Baker primarily confirms the fear that, when it comes to Israel, this administration is not driven by sentiment. It shows that this administration can be attentive to world and domestic public opinion, which demands a solution to the situation created by the intifadah [uprising]. This position particularly shows that the Americans are fed up with our tricks, stratagems, and double talk about a plan in the making, and our wish for direct negotiations without saying with whom and on what.

Clearly the administration does not want Shamir to come to Washington to celebrate and then go back home full of self-satisfaction for having proved the prophets of doom wrong. Although past experience shows that plans disliked by Israel—such as those named after Rogers, Saunders, Reagan, and Shultz—remained on the shelf and did not affect Israeli-U.S. relations, precedents do not always apply on these matters, particularly not when the situation in the field is worsening and crying for a solution. I also do not get the impression that Shamir is taking the events of the past week in Washington lightly.

It is too early to tell whether "the crisis" will occur next month, but the administration has definitely been practicing "brinkmanship" with the relations between the two countries.

If Shamir vehemently persists with his red lines, the Bush administration may seek to avoid a head-on confrontation with him, at this stage, and also avoid trying to promote a concept that has no chance of being accepted by Israel. In the long run, however, it will be hard to prevent the emergence of a policy whose bottom line will be support for an Israeli withdrawal and the establishment of a Palestinian political entity in the areas to be vacated. Although at the moment, this is merely a concept rather than a plan, using the idiom of which Arens (or Mischa, if you like) is so fond—that it takes two to tango—one may say that the administration has already started dancing. The question is how, at what stage, and at what intensity we will invited to join the tango.

Bush Promoting 'Notion of a Palestinian State'

TA1903131289 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 19 Mar 89 p 19

[Commentary by Arye Na'or: "The Palestinians' Balfour"]

[Text] The dispute between the United States and Israel seems to be progressing as if by an American plan. On the eve of Foreign Minister Arens' arrival in Washington, a senior Washington source leaked the basic points of a plan aimed at obtaining mutual concessions from Israel and the PLO—spelling the beginning of indirect negotiations between them. This plan was never shown to Arens. This was not because the administration suddenly reneged on the plan, but because there was no need to do so. It was sufficient to intimate that such a plan "is in the works" for the equation between Israel and the PLO to be drawn.

The foreign minister was still in Washington when his host, Secretary of State James Baker, appeared before a congressional committee and said that if Israel fails to talk to Palestinians in the territories, it will have to negotiate with the PLO. Arens talked to him on the phone after that hearing, but Baker nevertheless reiterated his position in public.

Even if there was even the flimsiest chance of finding Palestinians to talk to without the PLO's approval and instructions—and this in itself is highly debatable—then Baker's pronouncements literally dashed this hope. No Palestinian will talk to Israel when everyone knows that the United States believes Israel should talk to the PLO. If a Palestinian who was ready to conduct negotiations with Israel without the PLO's consent were found, he would be considered a traitor, with all its attendant implications.

In other words, the import of Baker's declarations is that from now on the United States will take action to bring Israel toward negotiations with the PLO. The United States can do this directly or indirectly, in pleasant ways padded with promises, or through overt pressure and threats. Nevertheless, the tactic that will be selected will not change the content: The political stalemate and the intifadah [uprising] have led the United States to the conclusion that the solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict lies in the incorporation of the PLO in the process. The Reagan administration had already put the "kosher" seal on 'Arafat; the Bush administration, whose attitude toward Israel is somewhat cooler, is steadily nurturing this approach.

The Americans know full well that negotiations with the PLO mean a Palestinian state. The minimum that organization could be satisfied with is a Palestinian state in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza. With or without the "right of return," with or without the "phased plan," the PLO will not be able to accept anything less than a sovereign state.

During his election campaign George Bush declared that the establishment of a Palestinian state is undesirable because it will threaten stability in the Middle East. Has the position of Bush the President altered that of Bush the candidate?

Even if his views have not changed in theory, in practice his policy actually promotes the notion of a Palestinian state. If he pursues this course he could well be the Balfour of the Palestinians. This is the result of the rejection of the international conference idea 2 years ago when Yitzhaq Shamir blocked the implementation of an agreement drawn by Shim'on Peres and King Husayn. Some members of the Israeli leftist circles will gloat over this development, but Likud supporters, advocates of Greater Israel, should do some serious soul searching. They can only complain about their chosen representatives whose myopia is preventing the attainment of their goal.

Galilee Residents To Fly to Baker Venues

TA1703160589 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 17 Mar 89 p A2

[Report by Menahem Horowitz]

[Text] Heads of settlements on the northern border, led by the Qiryat Shemona mayor, intend to charter a special plane that will take off from the Galilee Panhandle to anywhere in Europe or the Middle East the U.S. secretary of state visits, in order to protest to him against his remarks on negotiations between Israel and the PLO.

Qiryat Shemona Mayor Prosper 'Azran said that representatives of the public in the Galilee Panhandle will react very strongly to Baker's statement. "Through demonstrations and sit-down strikes in Europe we will explain to him how Yasir 'Arafat murdered innocent men, women, and children in Qiryat Shemona and the Galilee. We still remember how Qiryat Shemona turned into a PLO drill ground and artillery firing range," the Qiryat Shemona mayor said.

Shamir, Peres, Herzog Address Jewish Forum

TA2003202189 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 2000 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Excerpts] The Prime Minister's Conference on Jewish Solidarity opened at Jerusalem's Binyene Ha'ooma convention center this evening. In the opening address, President Hayim Herzog said that a peace settlement will be reached only if the Palestinian leadership abandons the path of violence and terrorism and accepts negotiations unconditionally. If the Palestinians adopt this course of action, they will find Israel stretching out its hand in an offer of peace.

Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir urged firmer Jewish support for Israel. Mr Shamir condemned the Palestinian Covenant, which calls for the destruction of Israel; he emphasized that the Jewish tradition shows a deep yearning for peace.

Vice Prime Minister Shim'on Peres said that the need for peace in the Middle East is vital for the Arab countries just as much as it is for Israel. Minister Peres pointed out that the solidarity conference is being held on the 10th anniversary of the peace agreement with Egypt. [passage omitted]

Six Yesh Gvul [There Is a Limit] members were detained at the entrance to the convention hall for distributing handouts condemning the use of violent measures against Palestinians.

Arab Notables Willing To Meet With Shamir

TA2103120889 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 21 Mar 89 pp 1, 13

[Report by Roni Shaqed]

[Excerpt] A group of Arab notables from the territories are willing to meet with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir. It is assessed that if the meeting takes place the Arab notables will make proposals for an interim arrangement in the territories. The members of the group have hinted that in the framework of such an arrangement they are willing to discuss an interim arrangement based on a "broad" autonomy.

Palestinian sources in East Jerusalem told YEDI'OT AHARONOT yesterday that the members of this group are holding contacts with Yosi Ben-Aharon, the director general of the Prime Minister's Office.

The contacts of this group with the Prime Minister's Office are held without the knowledge of the Civil Administration and the coordinator of activities in the territories.

Several of the group's members said yesterday that in addition to the prime minister they also want to meet several Likud ministers, mainly Ehud Olmert and Dan Meridor, in order to present them with their plan for an interim arrangement.

Sources close to the U.S. Administration say that the heads of the administration will tell Shamir during his visit in early April that he has 6 more months in which to find a leadership in the territories that would enter negotiations without the PLO. If Israel is unsuccessful, the U.S. Administration will ask Israel to open a dialogue with the PLO.

One of the members of the group is a resident of the Bethlehem district, a former Fatah member who was imprisoned for security reasons. He says that he has changed his political positions "out of a realistic assessment of the political conditions in the area and out of recognition of the mistakes made by the Palestinians in the past."

This man said that "one of the most serious mistakes was the refusal of the Palestinian leadership to join the autonomy negotiations that opened in 1979. Had the leadership joined the autonomy negotiations we would have had an independent Palestinian state today."

The heads of the group said they are willing to speak with Shamir about any plan he suggests. They are posing one condition only—that the prime minister give his public approval to open political activity in the territories in anticipation of holding elections there. In the framework of this activity, they want approval for the establishment of a new party that they want to call "the Democratic Palestinian Party."

The heads of the group say they fully recognize Israel. They add that they are willing to declare an end to terrorism, they are ready to accept broad autonomy as an interim stage toward a permanent settlement, and they are in favor of an international conference for solving the problem of the refugees.

The heads of the group have already held meetings with Palestinian notables from the territories belonging to the left and right wings. They briefed them about their plan for a broad autonomy as an interim stage. In these meetings, they were told by the Palestinian notables that if Israel shows interest in the plan it will be necessary to obtain the PLO's approval for entering real negotiations.

The Palestinian notables want to meet the prime minister before his departure to the United States. They say they realize that Shamir may want to use his meeting with them as an "alibi" in his talks in Washington, but they believe they should take this risk in order to open real negotiations with Israel. According to them, this is the only thing that can advance the Palestinian cause. [passage omitted]

Erez Meets ‘Acknowledged PLO Supporters’

TA2003185589 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1705 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Report by Arye Gus]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] Brigadier General Shay Erez, head of the Judaea and Samaria Civil Administration, had a very busy day. This afternoon he met about 20 notables from the Ramallah area, among them several acknowledged PLO supporters such as the priest ‘Awda Rantisi, the deposed deputy mayor of Ramallah; and supporters of the Islamic Resistance Movement such as Ibrahim Salim. Others who participated in the meeting include Raja‘ Shihadah from Ramallah; Yasir ‘Ubayd; and Jabi Baramaki, deputy rector of Bi‘r Zayt University.

The participants in the meeting directed Brig Gen Erez and Israel toward the PLO, saying that this is the fastest way to peace. One participant protested the humiliating conditions under which the residents of Judaea and Samaria are compelled to live while throughout the world they are being offered oranges and bananas. [sentence as heard]

Erez held similar meetings last week in Nabulus and Hebron. Today he also met with about 60 shaykhs and notables from the (?Jalal al-Din Salamat) tribe of the Bethlehem area as part of the meetings the Civil Administration holds with Judaea and Samaria residents. The meeting was reported as friendly. The shaykhs requested financial assistance for the damages they incurred during the cold snap, and raised agricultural problems that Erez promised to examine favorably. Erez is due to meet with additional personages from the Bethlehem area later tonight.

3 UNIFIL Soldiers Killed by Mine in Lebanon

TA2103095289 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0930 GMT 21 Mar 89

[Text] Three Irish soldiers serving with UNIFIL [UN Interim Forces in Lebanon] were killed about an hour ago when their vehicle drove over a mine near the village of Bra‘shit. Wide-scale searches are currently under way in the area to find the perpetrators. This is reported by our correspondent in the north Menahem Horowitz.

[Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 0900 GMT on 21 March reports: “A South Lebanese Army (SLA) tank drove over a mine last night. One soldier was wounded in the explosion. Our correspondent Hayim Hecht reports that SLA tank positions retaliated by shelling terrorist targets east of Sidon.”]

Cabinet Briefed on Recent Security Incidents

TA1903192589 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1800 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] At the weekly Cabinet session this morning, the Cabinet was informed about the Gaza incident and heard reports about Friday's ambush in the ‘Arava in which First Sergeant Oren Li‘or was killed. Jack Katzenell reports:

[Begin recording] [Katzenell] Heads of the defense establishment take a serious view of the ‘Arava ambush and of the recent incursion from Egypt by two Palestinian terrorists who attacked an army camp, wounding some soldiers, before being captured. However, the feeling in the defense establishment is that Egypt and Jordan are serious about preventing incidents of this kind, and it was noted with approval that Jordan has already caught the two terrorists from a Syrian-backed group who carried out the ambush in the ‘Arava. Defense Minister Rabin said Egypt and Jordan had been reminded, through the appropriate channels, that Israel holds them responsible for preventing illegal border crossings.

Police Minister Hayim Bar-Lev reported on the latest violence in the Gaza Strip, not just this morning's fatal incident, but also last week's clash in which three Palestinians were killed. In spite of these deaths, Bar-Lev was confident that the reinforcement of the Border Police in the Gaza Strip would help to maintain order with fewer Arab casualties.

[Bar-Lev] It is a well-known fact that the Border Police know how to deal with such situations that occur there, without having to use firearms. The fact that this time they had to use is just the exception that proves the rule, and nothing more.

[Katzenell] Turning to the arson incidents at the homes of left-wing opposition Knesset Member Ya‘ir Tzaban, Journalist Dan Margalit, and pollster Dr Mina Tzemah, Bar-Lev admitted that the police do not yet know whether the Sicarii who claimed responsibility for the fires is really a group or just one person, but he was confident that the arsonists would be caught.

Minister Without Portfolio Avner Sciaki of the National Religious Party said it is very important to catch the culprits quickly; heaven forbid that another Jewish underground should emerge, Sciaki said. He is one of the leading campaigners for the release of the original Jewish underground [members] from prison. [end recording]

Syrian ‘Fingerprint’ Seen on Attack From Jordan

TA1903124889 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 19 Mar 89 p 3

[Analysis by ‘Uzi Mahanaymi: “Syria Is Opening a Second Front”]

[Text] The announcement issued in Damascus yesterday by “Fatah the Uprising,” the pro-Syrian Abu Musa [Sa‘id Musa Muragha] organization, that it is responsible for the operation against the Israel Defense Forces 2 days ago is another Syrian "fingerprint" on a new front: The Israeli-Jordanian border in the 'Arava region. It constitutes a gross violation of Jordan's sovereignty.

In the past few months, the Syrians have launched an offensive on the Galilee through their emissaries—the Palestinian organizations under their patronage. Seeing that their attempts so far have failed, they evidently tried to penetrate the Israeli border at a place they regard as its soft underbelly: the 'Arava. This area has not been the scene of an infiltration for many years.

The following are the goals of the Syrians and of Abu Musa, whose splinter group left 'Arafat's Fatah:

—Opening a "second front" in addition to continuing infiltration attempts from the northern border;

—Undermining the status of 'Arafat, whose goal is pursuing negotiations with the United States;

—Sending a Syrian signal to King Husayn and others indicating that without Syria and the extremist Palestinian factions no political process will be possible;

—Abu Musa, who has weakened substantially recently, is making another attempt to resume operational activity.

The Jordanian security forces will now work vigorously to sabotage any Syrian-Palestinian attempt to turn the Jordanian border into a second front of terrorism against Israel. Presently the interests of both sides of the Jordanian-Israeli border coincide. Thus, with a little bit of luck, last week's incident will be an exception.

Prisoner on IDF Camp Attack

JN1803101689 Jerusalem Television Service in Arabic 1730 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Ayman Muhammad Hasan Yunus, 18, is one of the two terrorists who were arrested 2 days ago when they tried to attack an Israel Defense Forces [IDF] camp on the Egyptian-Israeli border. In an exclusive interview with our correspondent (Eli Kahil), Ayman revealed some details of the mission entrusted to him and his colleague, Iyad Abu Hasan.

[Begin recording] [(Kahil)] What was the aim of this operation?

[Yunus] Its aim was to destroy a camp and kill all the Israeli soldiers there.

[(Kahil)] Who was behind this operation?

[Yunus] The PLO, Fatah, and Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat].

[(Kahil)] And who recruited you?

[Yunus] Someone called Jihad. This might be a pseudonym. His name is Jihad.

[(Kahil)] And how was training?

[Yunus] Training was near a camp near an orchard in using the weapons, but there was no firing.

[(Kahil)] What then?

[Yunus] We were trained and left to carry out the operation.

[(Kahil)] Have the Egyptian authorities in Rafah noticed you?

[Yunus] No, they did not notice us, nor did they know about us.

[(Kahil)] It is well known that there is activity in the Canada camp to which you belong. What do you know about the rest of the activities carried out there?

[Yunus] There are certainly many activities stemming from the camp, but I do not know about them. Since they sent me, surely many people will be sent after me.

[(Kahil)] What did they promise you?

[Yunus] They promised to give me about $20,000 after the operation.

[(Kahil)] And now?

[Yunus] Now I get nothing.

[(Kahil)] Do you know why the operation failed?

[Yunus] Of course I know. First of all, they deceived me. They greatly simplified the operation for me. They said you cross the Egyptian border, and added that there is no barbed wire there or around the camp. They also said there would be no guards around the camp. I thought the operation would be quite easy and that we would return. Second, the strength of the IDF rendered the mission very difficult.

[(Kahil)] Ayman, would you like to say anything to your family in the camp on the Egyptian side of Rafah?

[Yusuf] I send them my greetings and reassure them that I am fine. [end recording]

Gen Shomron on Possible Syrian War, 'Terrorists'

TA1903192989 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1800 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] Chief of Staff General Dan Shomron says Syrian President al-Asad knows only too well that if he begins a war with Israel, nearly the entire weight of the Israel Defense Forces would be directed against him. Speaking to high school students in Ramat Hasharon, the chief of staff said the territories would not pin down Israeli forces in the event of a war. Gen Shomron said that Israel's other neighbors are aware of this.

On 'Improving' Strike Capacity

TA2003150889 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1400 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Chief of Staff Dan Shomron has said that Syria will fear using its sophisticated armaments, including chemical weapons, if it realizes that Israel's response will be firm. Our correspondent Dan Eshel reports that Lieutenant General Shomron told the steering forum for the Prime Minister's Conference on Jewish Solidarity that Israel is improving its capacity to strike at Syrian missile launching pads. Shomron added that the Israel Defense Forces will continue to enable the political echelon to pursue political channels from a position of strength.

IDF Views War With Syria as 'Improbable'

TA2003112189 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 20 Mar 89 p 2

[Report by Re'uven Pedatzur]

[Excerpt] Israel Defense Forces [IDF] assessments of a possible Syrian war initiative state that there has been no change in the threat of war in the past few months. The motivation for war does exist on the part of Syrian President al-Asad. It is believed by the IDF, however, that there is a long list of limitations that make the decision to wage total war against Israel very improbable. These limitations include economic difficulties, a fear of a Soviet failure to support an aggressive move, and a slow stream of military supplies from the USSR.

The steps the Syrians have taken recently are in line with routine activities and are in accordance with other fields of operation. The probability of a war breaking out on the Syrian border, therefore, remains as it was 6 to 12 months ago. [passage omitted]

Arab Sector To Call for 30 Mar General Strike

TA1703155289 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 17 Mar 89 p A1

[Report from the Galilee by 'Atallah Mansur and from the north by Menahem Horowitz]

[Excerpts] The Israeli Arab Follow-up Committee, made up of representatives of national Arab organizations, Arab Knesset members from all factions, and members of the secretariat of the Committee of Arab Local Councils, held a special meeting in Shefar'am yesterday in which it decided to call for a general strike of the 700,000 Arab citizens of Israel on Land Day (30 March), in protest over the discrimination against the Arab minority in Israel and as a token of solidarity with the intifadah [uprising] in the territories. It was also decided to resume fund-raising drives on behalf of the needy in the territories. [passage omitted]

Menahem Horowitz, HA'ARETZ correspondent in the north, reports: Minister Ehud Olmert, who is responsible for the Arab sector, said yesterday that the decision by the heads of the Arab councils to stage a general strike on 30 March on the occasion of Land Day is "a grave mistake that can result in disturbances on that day." In the past, the leaders of the Arab sector refrained from a general strike, settling only for rallies and processions in Arab villages. Minister Olmert estimates that the decision to strike stems only "from internal difficulties in the Arab sector and is not aimed at the government as the leaders of the Arab sector are trying to portray it." Olmert said this during a talk with Druze leaders on the Golan Heights.

Settlers Move Temporary Structures to Qalqilyah

TA2003202589 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 2000 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Members of a nucleus of settlers from Zofim today moved four temporary structures onto their settlement site, planned for the Qalqilyah vicinity. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that work at the site began several months ago. Permanent structures for the settlers will be built as soon as within the next few days. This settlement is not included in the eight settlements whose establishment was agreed to in the coalition pact. This settlement was approved in the previous coalition agreement, signed approximately 4 years ago.

Further on Incidents, Casualties in Territories

4 Wounded, 4 Settlers Arrested

TA2003173889 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1700 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Two inhabitants of Qabatiyah who were taking part in stone-throwing incidents were wounded by Israeli army gunfire. Two others were wounded in the Al-Am'ari refugee camp in Ramallah, one by plastic bullets and the other by live fire.

The Gaza District police arrested four settlers from Gush Qatif who are suspected of having vandalized Arab property and having conducted a vendetta to avenge the arson of the Nezer-Hazani packaging plant. The police arrested the four based on evidence describing the cars in which the suspects were driving. The four vandalized hothouses, set fire to a tractor, and tried to set houses on fire in Al-Zuhaydah and Dayr al-Balah in the Gaza Strip. Our correspondent Roni Sofer reports that the suspects are not cooperating with the police.

Officer Hit by Stone in Gaza

TA2003182889 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1800 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Excerpt] An army officer was lightly injured on his forehead during a stone-throwing incident today in Gaza's Al-Shaykh Radwan neighborhood. The officer was treated at a clinic and returned to his unit. Also in the Gaza Strip, stones were thrown this morning at an Israeli vehicle; this as Palestinian residents observed a general strike. [passage omitted]

Qalandiyah Resident Injured

TA2003191089 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1800 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Passengers on a bus that was pelted with rocks near the Qalandiyah refugee camp north of Jerusalem this evening disembarked, entered the camp, and fired in the air. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that army units later arrived at the scene of the incident and imposed order. Camp residents have reported at least one person injured, who was transferred to Al-Maqasid Hospital in East Jerusalem.

12 Injured in Territories

TA2003202989 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 2000 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Twelve residents of Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza were injured in clashes with soldiers and in stoning incidents today. In the Gaza Strip, six locals were slightly injured; four were hurt in the Al-Am'ari refugee camp near Ramallah and another two were wounded in Qabatiyah.

A new leaflet issued by Hamas, the Islamic Resistance Movement, was disseminated in the territories today. It lauds the Palestinians' bravery in the Al-Karamah raid [by the Israeli army] 21 years ago. The leaflet also calls upon the inhabitants of Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza to hang on to their land and mark Land Day [30 March] with a general strike. The authors of the pamphlet criticize the PLO's peace moves, but at the same time they note the need for coordination between Hamas and the Unified National Command of the Uprising.

2 Soldiers Injured in Gaza

TA2003211089 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 2100 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Two soldiers were hurt by rocks thrown at their vehicle in Gaza this evening. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that one of them was slightly injured, while the condition of the other is termed moderate. They were transferred to Barzilay Hospital in Ashqelon and are to undergo surgery tomorrow morning.

Firebomb Thrower Sentenced

TA2103083089 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0800 GMT 21 Mar 89

[Text] The military court in Nabulus has sentenced Muhammad Da'ud from Qalqilyah to life in prison after convicting him of murdering 'Ofra and Tal Moses [Alfe Menashe settlers who burned to death when their car was hit by a firebomb in April 1988]. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that despite the fact that the prosecutor had not demanded capital punishment, two judges thought he should be given the death sentence. Nevertheless, because the ruling was not unanimous, the presiding judge, Colonel Yehoshu'a Levi, decided to sentence Da'ud to life. Avraham Moses, the family's father, said he was disappointed with the sentence.

1 Wounded in IDF Fire

TA2103114289 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1100 GMT 21 Mar 89

[Text] A local inhabitant was moderately wounded by Israeli army gunfire in Gaza's Al-Nasir neighborhood. He was shot when he tried to attack an Israeli army patrol with a pickax. Our correspondents Karmela Menashe and Arye Gus report that the wounded man was taken to Al-Shifa' Hospital in the city.

Searches continue in Gaza for a weapon lost last night by an Israeli soldier when he and his colleague were attacked with stones. There is a general strike in the Gaza Strip today, and all the refugee camps as well as several neighborhoods in Gaza and Rafah remain under curfew.

[Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 1000 GMT on 21 March reports: "Twelve girl students were arrested and another 40 were held for interrogation in the wake of disturbances in East Jerusalem today. Our police affairs correspondent Moshe Nussbaum reports that the students threw stones and tried to block roads in East Jerusalem."]

1 Explosive Detonates in Petah Tiqva

TA2103110689 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0930 GMT 21 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Two explosive charges were found this morning in a trash can in Petah Tiqva. One of them exploded, and the second one was found in the same trash can a few minutes later. In both instances there were no casualties. [passage omitted]

Report of Tornado Aircraft Purchase Denied
JN2003193889 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1800 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] London, 20 Mar (WAKH)—The Jordanian Embassy in London has denied that Jordan has signed contracts to buy Tornado aircraft from Britain and West Germany.

Jordanian officials said that reports claiming that the Jordanian monarch, King Husayn, had struck a deal worth 500 million pounds sterling do not contain a grain of truth.

Reports had indicated that British Prime Minister Margeret Thatcher had sent a message to FRG Chancellor Helmut Kohl expressing her disappointment at Bonn's delay in providing official support for credits for the Jordanian aircraft deal.

Paper Views U.S. Mideast Policy 'Developments'
JN1803091889 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 18 Mar 89 pp 1, 20

[Editorial: "Washington Between Theoretical Positions and Credibility"]

[Text] No one is ignoring developments in the U.S. position on the Palestine question, represented by Washington's advice to Israel to talk with the PLO, its call for an indefinite freeze in the establishment of settlements in the occupied territories, and its warning that failure to respond to this call may deprive Israel of the protection of the U.S. veto. However, these developments must be augmented by the U.S. Administration's acceptance of an international conference with full powers to ensure Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Palestinian territories and to enable the Palestinian people to exercise their rights on their soil.

Needless to say, if Washington does not take this step, the developments so far will not be enough to move the peace process forward in the region; consequently, the suffering of the Palestinian strugglers in the occupied territories—caused by the oppression, murder, and displacement perpetrated by the occupation authorities—will continue.

It goes without saying that expediting the international conference, adhering to its aims and conditions, and ensuring the participation of the Security Council's permanent member states and all parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict, is now urgent and is the measure of credibility to which Washington must be committed.

Honesty forces us to say that if the U.S. Administration is serious in its dialogue with the PLO, in calling on Israel to talk with the PLO and freeze the settlements, and in its desire for detente with the Soviet Union, there is no reason for it to delay the international conference, especially since this administration has been familiar with the Palestine question over the past 8 years.

Frankness also demands that we say that Shamir's rejection of U.S. advice would be a test for the U.S. Administration. Advice remains within theoretical bounds until matched by the will to turn it into positive political action. It is well known that Washington has the resources to force Shamir to take its advice seriously if it so desires.

Current circumstances call for the practical implementation of principles. As we have said, we are not ignoring recent developments in the U.S. position, but we stress again that if these developments do not lead to the convening of the international conference to return the Palestinian land to its owners and enable the Palestinian people to exercise their rights on their soil, they will remain in the realm of theory, unable to advance the peace process in the region. They will lack the credibility to translate them into positive actions.

Foreign Minister Returns From ICO Session
JN1603190689 Amman Television Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Marwan al-Qasim, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, returned to Amman this evening after taking part in the 18th Islamic Conference Organization [ICO] foreign ministers meeting.

In a statement to PETRA, Al-Qasim said that the conference came at a time of favorable international conditions that enabled the Islamic countries to discuss thier issues in a brotherly constructive spirit. He also said that Jordan's participation in the conference was based on the premise of responsibility in dealing with Islamic issues, and that Jordan contributed to a number of resolutions reflecting the current concerns and objectives of the Arab and Islamic nations.

Prince Hasan Inaugurates Project With Kuwait
JN1603203789 Amman Television Service in English 2000 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan, the regent, opened a liquid fertilizer plant in Al-'Aqabah today which was set up by the Jordanian-Kuwaiti Agricultural Company. He also inaugurated a plant for packing rice at the port of Al-'Aqabah. Several cabinet members, leading economists, and officials attended the opening ceremonies.

Later, the regent opened the Court of Justice building in Al-'Aqabah. The court complex, which cost 250,000 dinars, houses a first instance court, peace courts, a criminal court hall, the General Prosecutor's office, a library, and other essential facilities.

The ministers of justice and interior were among the dignitaries present at the ceremony.

Official Map Reflects West Bank Disengagement

JN2103144189 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 21 Mar 89

[Randah Habib dispatch from Amman]

[Text] Observers have noticed a change in the new edition of the Jordanian map. For the first time on the official map, the word "Palestine" appears in boldface type on the region west of the Jordan River, including the West Bank. In addition, there was a change on the eastern borders with Iraq. The new map, issued by the Royal Geographic Center, reflects Jordanian policy in the decision to disengage from the occupied West Bank, which was a part of the Kingdom until 31 July 1988.

The new map shows the armistice line between Jordan and Israel, as drawn by the armistice agreement signed in Rhodes in 1949, extending from Lake Tiberias in the north to the Red Sea in the south. As a result of this change, Jordan's area, registered in the margin of the map, is now about 90,000 square kilometers, instead of the previous figure of 96,000 square kilometers including the West Bank.

On the other hand, the new map shows a new eastern border with Iraq in accordance with the agreement signed between the two countries on 19 March 1984. In accordance with this agreement, the two countries exchanged 196 square kilometers so that Iraq's (Isna) region has become Jordanian and the previously Jordanian Mirba' region now belongs to Iraq.

Columnist Calls for Stabilization of Dinar

JN1603143989 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 16 Mar 89 p 20

[Dr Fahd al-Fanik's "Highlights" column: "The Dinar's Exchange Rate in 5 Weeks"]

[Text] The daily foreign exchange bulletin issued by the central bank and used as a reference by commercial banks and finance companies shows that the Jordan dinar's exchange rate has stabilized at 542 fils to the U.S. dollar since 9 February 1989; that is, since 5 weeks ago. Indications are that the central bank intends to stabilize the dinar's exchange rate at $1.85 for an indefinite period—and that could be a long time.

Actually, the stabilization of the dinar's official exchange rate against the dollar has not been absolute. The U.S. dollar may be an important international currency, but it is not the only international currency used as a yardstick for measuring other currencies.

If the dinar's exchange rate against the dollar is stable, the increase in the dollar's exchange rate in the world market since 29 February 1989 means, in effect, an overall increase in the dinar's exchange rate against other foreign currencies.

The dinar's exchange rate has risen against various currencies, although this rise has varied from one currency to another. The dinar rose against the British pound by 2.5 per cent; against the Deutsche mark by 0.3 per cent; against the Swiss franc by 0.9 per cent; and against the Japanese yen by 1.2 per cent. Thus, the average increase in the dinar's exchange rate was 0.87 per cent overall against the 10 major currencies during the 5 weeks; that is, 9 per cent annually, at the current rate. We notice this in the depreciation in the announced exchange rate of the pound sterling from 952 to 928.9 fils; the Deutsche mark from 291.7 to 290.8 fils; the Swiss franc from 343 to 340 fils; and the Japanese yen from 4.22 to 4.17 fils and so forth.

We base this comparison on the daily bulletin issued by the central bank. We are not trying to prove that the dinar is regaining strength because we are not supporters of a strong dinar. We believe that an increase in the dinar's exchange rate does not serve the Jordanian economy: it will not provide the incentive for making the necessary adaptation to encourage exports and reduce imports, will not give preference to local products over exported products, and will not achieve a balance between the supply of foreign currencies and the demand for them.

What is required now is not to strengthen or weaken the Jordanian dinar but to maintain it at a relatively stable rate so that citizens and businessmen can make their decisions with confidence. And there will be no more reasons to postpone transfers and investments because of expected changes in the exchange rate.

All those who deal with foreign currencies—exporters, importers, investors, expatriates, and savers—should know that the dinar's exchange rate will remain stable in the short- and medium term. They should also know that they can resume their normal activities without expecting any rise or fall in the exchange rate. The national economy will not be served by increasing or decreasing the value of the dinar, but by stabilizing it.

'Awn Delivers Address to Nation 17 Mar

NC1703210589 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1920 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Address by Prime Minister and Army Commander General Michel 'Awn to the Lebanese people; place and date not given—recorded]

[Text] My message today is a pledge to prevent the fire of occupation from consuming the achievements realized in the realm of freedom of decision and the march of liberation.

We have gone beyond the stage of submission and surrender to the hegemonic forces. We have started the march of liberation, which was a dream submerged in a sea of humiliation. We will no longer allow the torch to be extinguished, nor will we allow our hopes to be buried or the popular dreams of liberation to be confined again in the prisons of domination, repression, and oppression.

The positive factors, as well as the relaxation of tension, that were achieved as a result of the meetings of the Arab Good Offices Committee in Tunis were not to the liking of the occupation forces. They tried to remove these positive factors with iron and fire. They prevented those who are under their control from accepting these positive factors. Those who stood to lose from the success of every Arab or international effort to extricate Lebanon from its ordeal and liberate it from their grip sought to abort the Tunis meetings before they had even begun. They were responsible for various procedural obstacles, in addition to several challenges and provocations, in order to make the government decide not to participate in the Arab League initiative and later to hold it responsible for the failure of the initiative.

Among these obstacles was their insistence on downgrading the Lebanese representation in the talks from the prime ministerial level to the level of party or community leader. However, we overlooked all these formalities, despite their important implications, out of concern for the supreme national interest, which is more important.

They then rumored that the prime minister is intransigent, inflexible, and not ready for a dialogue or meeting. They were shocked when they found that it was the other parties—those under Syrian control—that evaded the dialogue and rejected a meeting. Thus, world public opinion realized that it is the Syrian presence in Lebanon that restricts the freedom of the Lebanese and prevents them from any activity, stand, or orientation toward internal detente. Some of these parties justified their failure to exercise their freedom of decision by expressing the fear that any meeting or dialogue among the Lebanese would be considered recognition of the sole legitimate government. Due to this pressure, the Lebanese problem was depicted as the problem of two governments. It was made to appear that the rules for any dialogue between them are the same as those international norms that govern dealings between two states or between an Arab state and a foreign state.

Despite all this, the Tunis meetings achieved important positive results, which we declined to announce so that those who stood to lose from them would not be able to abort them. However, the intention to foil these results was there. They succeeded in foiling a positive outcome by stalling the Arab committee's third round of talks in Kuwait. The flagrant Syrian intervention became clear from the attempt to stipulate names, specify qualifications, and distribute rights to participate, talk, and remain silent.

Thus, the security situation in Lebanon exploded, exposing the subversive Syrian role and the instruments of this role which share the interests and gains, and exposing the helpless people who are deprived of their freedom of decisionmaking. What was the real cause of this deliberate flare-up? Was it the issue of the ports, which they used as a false excuse for the purpose of deception and camouflage? O Lebanese, the issue of closing down the illegal ports in the face of smuggling, terrorism, and piracy, used to be a pressing international demand, a more pressing Arab demand, a daily Syrian challenge, and a Lebanese dream worth dying for. When the dream came true and the illegal ports were closed and the crossings were opened, those who stood to lose from that did not dare declare their opposition for fear of the people's vengeance. Thus, they announced their consent unwillingly. At the same time they targeted these ports and crossings and attacked them with their destructive weapons, behind a subservient facade, and through hired media.

This development was no surprise to us. How can the occupier allow the closure of the means of strengthening his economy at the expense of his victim's treasury? How can he relinquish his tidbit for the sake of the crushed and oppressed starving people? They could not absorb the catastrophe of the decline of the dollar by more than 100 Lebanese pounds in less than a week. They were shocked by the sight of the Lebanese meeting on both sides of the port and museum crossings as if they were celebrating the incredible joy of salvation. They were scared to see the contact lines and the humiliating crossing points crumble in a matter of days. They paid a lot to make these lines and crossings a divisive Berlin wall between the Lebanese that took more than 14 years to build. They closed a crossing, claiming that there was a blockade. So we opened another, and declared all the crossings open. They monopolized fuel supplies so that they could claim that another blockade was in progress. Then we flooded the market with fuel at ordinary prices. For the first time, there were no illegitimate increases.

The occupier became convinced that the bases of the division which he imposed were no longer able to hold out against the opening of a crossing, closure of a port, or removal of a checkpoint. So he used his weapon, which is both old and new, to subvert the spontaneous accord that was born and developed during the period between the Tunis meetings and the opening of the crossings.

Shells landed on the two parts of the capital, and struck the innocent people and their houses. It is a characteristic of the perpetrators which is well known to the Lebanese. To cover up their crime they demanded an investigative committee. We hastened to welcome this and declare our readiness to place all evidence, proofs, and incriminations at the committee's disposal. But they also hastened to kill off this initiative.

They mobililized all tools of war and killing and the drums of the hired media. They started making threats and preparing for a frenzied act of revenge. They failed to assassinate the prime minister, the head of the legitimate authority, and they failed to destroy the decision in favor of liberation and restoration of sovereignty. They claimed we are one people in two states. But we tell them: We may be one people in two states, but we are not one people with regard to the values in which we believe. Our people believe in freedom, democracy, openness, and cultural richness. But you are assassinating a freedom that does not belong to you, a democracy which is out of your reach, an openness and richness that you [word indistinct].

We believe in the Arab League Charter, the UN Charter, and human rights. You disregard the Arab charters, UN Charters, and human rights. We have our identity and you are free to assume any identity that you want. We are two fraternal Arab peoples, in brotherly love and dignity, in the full meaning of the term. But each of us has his own house, freedom, sanctities, and characteristics.

We want to remain two fraternal peoples. Our dignity and the sword of sovereignty over our own land should settle matters between us. But negotiations and dialogue cannot take place at the point of a gun, whether it belongs to a brother, friend, or enemy. Our accord is a Lebanese issue that needs neither Syrian nor non-Syrian guns to achieve it. The U.S. guns failed to unify the two Vietnams. The tanks of the Soviet giant did not find it humiliating to leave Afghanistan without imposing accord through the force of its tanks.

At any rate, we are not a backward or handicapped people that needs rehabilitation to gain its independence or achieve accord.

O Lebanese, our decision is to liberate the South and regain our sovereignty over the whole of our land, in accordance with the UN resolutions. In our free land, we can achieve a strong accord, based on the principles of justice, right, and equality. We need no custodian or advocate who claims to defend some of us against the others, while humiliating our kinfolk, exhausting our resources, and usurping our sovereignty.

O Lebanese, our steadfast people have had enough humiliation and our holy land has had enough occupation. They are entitled to freedom, sovereignty, and dignity. No sacrifice is too great for the sake of the people and for the sake of Lebanon. Long live Lebanon.

'Awn Cables Saudis, Kuwaitis, Arab League

NC1803155989 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1445 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] In his capacity as foreign minister, Prime Minister General Michel 'Awn sent a cable to the Saudi and Kuwaiti foreign ministers and the secretary general of the Arab League today. The cable said: In implementation of your request and appeal following the recent painful incidents, we have issued instructions for the Lebanese Army to refrain from returning fire. However, despite this, shells are still being fired from the Syrian side at ports and utilities in the areas outside its occupation boundaries, causing death and devastation. Acting on our orders, the Lebanese Army is exercising self-control until now. The cable added: We wish to inform you of what is happening in the Lebanese arena, out of our confidence that you are aware of the seriousness of the Syrian occupier's intransigence and of the consequences of this continued shelling, killing,and destruction.

Amal's Birri Meets With Communist Party Head

NC1503142589 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1230 GMT 15 Mar 89

[Text] George Hawi, secretary general of the Lebanese Communist Party met today with Amal Movement leader Nabih Birri. They reviewed the latest local developments, particularly in the wake of yesterday's black Tuesday massacre perpetrated by 'Awn and his military gangs.

Answering a question after the meeting, Hawi said: We felt it was our duty to hold consultations in order to curb this madness, this obsession with haughtiness originating from a sick mentality and mental retardation. This, he noted, will harm not only the hostile generals of Al-Yarzah [Defense Ministry headquarters], but will also inflict great damage on all segments of the Lebanese Army, Lebanese people in all areas, and on the future and fate of the Lebanese cause.

He said: We would like to mention two points: First, we call on all prudent people of good will, especially in the eastern area and more precisely on those whose views are being expressed by His Beatitude Sfayr, to raise their voice in the face of this insanity so that their voices may combine with the good intentions of all spiritual leaders and the government of Dr Salim al-Huss to stop this bloodshed and deal with this madness. The second point is our call for unity among all nationalist and progressive forces so that these forces may be extremely vigilant and mobilize their human, material, and military potentials and resources in anticipation of any event. If the intransigent people in Al-Yarzah find no one to pour cold water on their heads, all the Lebanese nationalist forces, foremost of which are the nationalist army's brigades, ought to be ready to call off these hot heads and extricate Lebanon from the ordeal, with which they are threatening Lebanon once again.

Birri on Explosion, Abolition of Operation Rooms
NC1703163189 Beirut Voice of National Resistance in Arabic 1530 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] On behalf of the Amal Movement and the nationalist forces, Amal Movement leader Minister Nabih Birri has strongly condemned the criminal explosion which rocked the Al-Zalqah area, describing it as absolutely grotesque.

At a news conference this afternoon, Minister Birri said: We are all trapped in the ordeal. The government's decision to establish public security posts and customs centers in all ports was met by the establishment of a navigation operations room, bombardment, and massacres. This compelled the nationalist forces to set up a ground operations room for self-defense.

Minister Birri said that the solution rests in the abolition of the two operations rooms. He added: I tell them that if the military escalation is meant to speed up the election of a president, they had better try another trick. He said that what is required is the election of a regime, not a person.

French Magazine Cited on New Terrorist Group
NC1503172689 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1445 GMT 15 Mar 89

[Text] According to the French magazine LE POINT, the French intelligence service has taken recent terrorist Shi'ite threats, originating from Lebanon and Iran, seriously. The magazine disclosed that a new organization called the World Revolutionary Islamic Forces [Al-Quwwat al-Thawriyah al-Islamiyah fi al-'Alam] has been set up in Beirut and is coordinating with the Abu Nidal and Ahmad Jibril groups. The French authorities, the magazine added, had dicovered smuggling operations relating to stolen or lost passports belonging to Arabs residing in France. When modified, these passports allow terrorists coming from the Middle East to enter France, it said.

Army Clashes With PSP, Syrian Forces Reported

Rockets Hit Kasrawan Coast
NC1903062989 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] A number of rockets fell on the Kasrawan coast at approximately 0530 today. Security sources believe the source of fire to be a rocket launcher in 'Ayn al-Muraysah [in West Beirut].

Earlier, skirmishes took place overnight along the Beirut and mountain combat lines. The Army positions in Bdadun, Humal, and Bsus came under bursts of machinegun fire from the pro-Junblatt positions.

Kayfun, Suq al-Gharb Shelled
NC1903182589 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1645 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] The Lebanese Army positions on the outskirts of Kayfun and in Dahr al-Wahsh and Suq al-Gharb on the mountain came under artillery and rocket fire at approximately 1700 today. Skirmishes with automatic weapons are now taking place there.

Earlier this afternoon, intermittent clashes took place on the 'Ayn al-Rummanah and Al-Shiyah combat lines. At 1655, a rocket was fired at Beirut port.

The Kasrawan plain was the target of 20 rockets from a rocket launcher in 'Ayn al-Muraysah at dawn today.

In another development, a Lebanese Army patrol boat diverted the ship "'Abbudah", which was headed for Tripoli port, to Beirut port this morning. The ship was loaded with chemical fertilizers and came from Romania.

Army Fires From 'Arayya
NC2003060789 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 0530 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] General 'Awn's military gangs began to escalate the situation in the mountain at 0645 this morning when they opened machinegun and mortar fire from their positions in 'Arayya against the combat lines in Dahr al-Wahsh, Hayy al-Zahhar, Shuwayt, and Duhur al-'Ibadiyah. The attacks are continuing as of this report.

Clashes Along on Suq al-Gharb
NC2003061589 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] There was a new security setback along the mountain combat lines this morning. Violent clashes, in which artillery and rockets were used, took place along the Suq al-Gharb combat lines at approximately 0630 today. The clashes started to abate by the time we prepared this newscast.

During the fighting, the residential areas adjacent to the combat lines on the outskirts of Al-Kahhalah and 'Arayya were shelled.

PSP Shells Port, Residences
NC2003080589 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0745 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Progressive Socialist Party gunmen have intensified their bombardment of residential areas. Meanwhile, a shell landed on Beirut port at around 0930.

This security escalation comes in the wake of attacks on residential areas in Al-Kahhalah, 'Arayya, Dahr al-Wahsh, the outskirts of Al-Hazimiyah, Al-Mukallis, the Monte Verde and Al-Matn coast. Two Lebanese Army soldiers were injured in the bombardment of 'Arayya, Al-Kahhalah, and Dahr al-Wahsh.

Syrian Role in Clashes

NC2003083089 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0815 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Excerpt] The security situation remains tense along the combat lines in the mountain. Clashes involving the use of artillery and rockets are continuing intermittently. Casualties have been reported among the ranks of the Lebanese Army in Suq al-Gharb.

According to reliable security sources, Syrian artillery emplacements in Majdal Ba'na, Bhamdun, and 'Alayh have participated in the clashes. [passage omitted]

Army Command Statement

NC2003094689 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0915 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Statement issued by General Michel's 'Awn's Army Command Guidance Directorate on 20 March]

[Text] For 6 successive days an almost constant shelling has continued to be directed from artillery emplacements in the Syrian-controlled areas against Army positions, ports, and certain residential areas, causing deaths in the Army's ranks, claiming civilian victims, and destroying property.

Despite the Army's commitment not to return the fire to its sources, artillery pieces in the mountain and certain areas in the southern coast have been pouring their shells on the Suq al-Gharb front, Brummana, B'abdat, Monte Verde, al-Jumhur, Al-Kahhalah and 'Arayya since dawn. The Army had to return the fire to silence the attacking positions.

Beirut Runway Shelled

NC2003102889 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0945 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Security sources have pointed out that the shelling of the eastern runway of Beirut Airport at approximately 1015 originated from an emplacement of the Progressive Socialist Party in 'Ayn 'Nub on the mountain directed by the Syrian occupation troops.

Approximately 20 minutes ago, a number of shells fell on the Hay al-Sullam area in Beirut's southern suburb. These had been fired from an emplacement situated behind Mtull Shimlan on the mountain.

In the meantime, fighting is still going on between the Lebanese Army personnel and the pro-Junblatt gunmen along the combat lines. Rockets, artillery, and tank fire are being used in the clashes.

Kayfun, Basur Hills Shelled

NC2003111789 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1000 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Excerpts] Carrying on with his tyrannical tampering with the citizen's security and stability, and in continuation of his success in aborting the work of the Arab six-member committee, 'Awn and his gangs caused the security situation in the mountain to deteriorate at dawn today.

Kayfun and the Basur Hills have been struck by 80-mm and 120-mm mortars while, artillery shells and rockets have fallen on the combat lines in the mountain and adjacent areas. Citizens are advised to use caution to avoid the treachery of 'Awn's military gangs. [passage omitted]

Meanwhile, the military gangs shelled a runway at Beirut International Airport at 1015 today. [passage omitted]

In another development, the 'Awn-Saddam scheme continues to maintain the tense atmosphere and abort all attempts to reach a solution. As part of coordination to further intensify and escalate the situation, an officer of the military gang, 'Isam Abu Jamrah, headed for Baghdad yesterday.

E. Beirut Attacked From Mountain

NC2003114889 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1136 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] The residential areas of B'abda, [place name indistinct], and Al-Hadath are once again coming under indiscriminate artillery fire from the mountain areas.

In another development, we would like to notify the public that Al-'Usayli laboratory in the Al-Bawshariyah District will detonate an unspecified amount of dynamite between 1300 and 1500 today.

Residential Area Shelling Eases

NC2003133989 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] The intensity of the shelling of the residential areas in Al-'Ibadiyah, Duhur al-'Ibadiyah, Shuwayt, Al-Zahhar, 'Alayh, Bhamdun, Baysur, and (Al-Gabont) emanating from the artillery emplacements in Monte Verde, 'Arrayah, Al-Wadaya, 'Ayn Sa'adah, Mansuriyat Al-Matn, Al-Mukallis, 'Almat and Kasrawan, has eased.

The shelling expanded at one time to include Al-Karamah Road and Majdalayyah, which were subjected to an intensive shelling. Several shells fell on Damascus Road, making traffic precarious.

The indiscriminate shelling also reached the areas of Al-Raml Al-'ali, the Airport circle, and Hayy al-Sullam. Sulayman Ja'far was killed and Fatimah Nazhah was wounded as a result.

The radio of General Michel 'Awn has reproted that Army Lieutenant Pierre Rashid was killed and three soldiers were wounded as a result of today's shelling.

Clashes on Kasrawan Coast Continue

NC2003180689 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1545 GMT 20 mar 89

[Text] Attacks on the eastern areas are continuing, particularly on areas in central Kasrawan and the Kasrawan coast, where another volley of shells landed at 1725. Security reports spoke of a number of casualties as a result of the violent bombardment. Security sources said the source of the shelling was emplacements in ('Uyun al-Rihban), Al-'ali al-Za'rur, and Tarshish in upper Al-Matn.

The attacks on central Kasrawan up to the tip of the coast began at approximately 1545, when a number of shells from upper Al-Matn fell. This was followed by periodic shelling which wounded Maurice Tannus, George Tannus, and Sharbil Makhkhul, who were taken to Sayyidat Lubnan Hospital, as well as Mari Khalil, who was taken to Pasteur Hospital where she was treated and discharged. The violent, random shelling of the Kasrawan area also caused material damage to buildings and burned many cars.

This afternoon, sporadic machinegun fire at the capital's axes continued, extending from the port to Dar al-Kitab and Al-Tayyunah. The museum area also came under heavy-caliber 500-mm machinegun fire.

Meanwhile, intermittent clashes are still taking place on the mountain, but their intensity has abated somewhat. These clashes coincided with shelling of the B'abda, Al-Hadath, Sibnay, and Batshay areas at 1315. A woman was killed in Batshay.

Beirut, Mountain 'Tense'

NC2003214289 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1945 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Excerpts] Tension remains high along the combat lines in the mountain area following clashes which took place tonight with all types of weapons between the Lebanese Army positions and the socialist gunmen's positions.

Tension is also high on the combat lines in Mazda, Sannin, and Hursh al-Kufuri in the capital where intermittent sniper fire is being exchanged. Clashes involving machineguns and rockets took place at 1940 and some shells landed on the race course area and in the museum area. [passage omitted]

Progeressive Socialist Party sources said that shells landed on Shtawrah, Ta'nayil, Sa'd Nayil, Jalalah, Ta'labayya, Al-Mudayrij, and Dahr al-Baydar. It has also been reiterated in West Beirut that shells have fallen on Ra's al-Nab', the Bishara al-Khuri area, and the Al-Barbir Hospital vicinity.

Security sources have confirmed that the eastern area's artillery answered the Syrian occupation emplacements, inflicting several casualties in the ranks of the occupation soldiers.

The indiscriminate shelling of the B'abda, Al-Hadath, Bitshay, Sibnay, and Al-Antuniyah vicinity tonight resulted in the death of 9-year-old Sharbil Qamar and the serious wounding of his brother Elie, who is now undergoing surgery in Qalb Yasu' Hospital. Their mother and sister were also wounded. [passage omitted]

Renewed Clashes in Suq al-Gharb

NC2103064189 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0515 GMT 21 Mar 89

[Text] Three shells fell on the Kasrawan coast at approximately 0700 hours today, followed by another two shells a short time ago. Meanwhile, intermittent clashes broke out on the Suq al-Gharb combat lines at about 0630 hours, particularly on the 'Ayn al-Sayyidah and Qurs al-Mudawwar lines after the Progressive Socialist Party men directed sniper and shell fire at the Army positions. However, the clashes remained limited.

Beirut Crossing Closed

NC2103081589 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0800 GMT 21 Mar 89

[Text] The Al-Barbir-Museum crossing point and the Franciscan Road were closed to traffic as of 0915 today. Tension remains high along the combat lines in mountain areas as a result of the continuing exchange of machinegun and rocket fire between Progressive Socialist Party positions and those manned by the Al-Yarzah [Defense Ministry] Army.

In another development, a Lebanese Hawker Hunter fighter flew provocative sorties over the capital and the coast this morning on the pretext of monitoring the Lebanese waters.

Jordanian Minister Arrives To Discuss Trade

JN1503084589 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 15 Mar 89 p 1

[Excerpt] Damascus (Petra, J.T.)—Minister of Supply Fayiz al-Tarawinah arrived in Damascus Tuesday on a three-day visit to Syria to discuss Jordanian-Syrian cooperation in supply affairs.

Tarawinah stated before his departure that his talks with the Syrian officials, including Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi will focus on the exchange of foodstuffs between the two countries on the basis of barter trade.

Jordan's cooperation with Syria in implementation of resolutions passed by the Jordanian-Syrian Higher Committee held in Amman last month and greater scopes of cooperation will also be discussed during the visit, Tarawinah said.

Tarawinah is accompanied by Ministry of Agriculture's Secretary General Salim al-Lawzi and director of the Ministry's warehouses department Ahmad Hindawi. [passage omitted]

Meets With Prime Minister

JN1603140089 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1215 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Damascus—Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi received Jordanian Supply Minister Dr Fayiz al-Tarawinah at 1300 today. Hassan al-Saqqa, minister of supply and internal trade, attended the meeting.

At the beginning of the meeting, Dr al-Tarawinah conveyed Jordanian Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i's greetings to Prime Minister al-Zu'bi. The prime minister greeted Dr al-Tarawinah and asked him to convey his greetings and best wishes to Al-Rifa'i. The discussions concerned steps that are being taken based on the results the meetings of the Jordanian-Syrian Higher Committee. The talks also dealt with promoting bilateral relations, particularly in the economic and trade spheres in the mutual interest of the two fraternal countries and people.

Polish Defense Minister Confers With Al-Zu'bi

JN2003202389 Damascus Television Service in Arabic 1830 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Mahmud al-Zu'bi, chairman of the Council of Ministers, received General Florian Siwicki, Polish national defense minister, at 1900 today. General Mustafa Talas, deputy commander in chief of the Army and Armed Forces, deputy prime minister, and defense minister, and the Polish ambassador in Damascus attended the meeting.

To begin the meeting, Gen Siwicki conveyed the Polish Government's greetings to the Syrian Government and stressed the profound relations between the two friendly peoples and countries. He put a high value on Syria's firm and principled policies for the region under President Hafiz al-Asad, stressing Poland's support for our struggle to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

The Polish defense minister noted the need to deepen, strengthen, and develop relations between the two countries, especially in economic areas, and to promote these relations to the level of the existing good political relations to serve their mutual interests and benefits.

The chairman of the Council of Ministers welcomed Gen Siwicki and asked him to convey the Syrian Government's greetings to the Polish Government. He stressed the historic and militant relations between the two friendly peoples and countries and their side-by-side struggle against the enemy. He also affirmed the need to deepen joint cooperation in the various areas, especially in the economic and trade areas.

Al-Zu'bi also reiterated our firm position under President Hafiz al-Asad on the Arab-Israeli conflict as well as our struggle to achieve a just and comprehensive peace. Then he referred to Israel's aggressive and expansionist policy, which rejects the peace process, the principles of which have been approved by the international community. During the meeting, talks also concerned promoting relations between the two peoples and countries to serve their mutual interests and benefits.

Meets With Defense Minister

JN2003173089 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1615 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Damascus—Official talks opened at noon today between General Mustafa Talas, deputy commander in chief of the Army and Armed Forces, deputy prime minister, and defense minister, and Polish Defense Minister General Florian Siwicki. Generals 'Ali Aslan and Hasan Turkmani, deputy chiefs of staff, and other ranking officers of the General Command participated in the talks. On the Polish side, the talks were also attended by the defense minister's delegation and the Polish ambassador in Damascus.

Foreign Minister Leaves for Visit to France

JN2003214189 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 2115 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Damascus—Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and his delegation left Damascus for Paris this afternoon on an official visit to France during which he will hold talks with French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas. He will also meet with French President Francois Mitterrand and a number of senior officials. Their talks will center on the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Middle East situation, Lebanon, and other international issues of common concern. The talks will also deal with promoting bilateral relations between Syria and France in all fields.

Ba'th Party Official Endorses Peace Conference

JN2003210089 Damascus Television Service in Arabic 1830 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Comrade 'Abdallah al-Ahmar, assistant secretary general of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, met this afternoon with the comrades who are participating in the party's 36th central training course at the Higher Institute for Political Sciences. At the begining of his conversation, Comrade Al-Ahmar conveyed the greetings of struggler President Hafiz al-Asad, Ba'th Party secretary general and president of the republic, to the participants. After listening to questions about the progress and outcome of the course, he reviewed the leading role of the party, the formulas of militant action, and the developments and progress achieved on all fronts by the Corrective Movement, which was led by comrade struggler President Hafiz al-Asad, Ba'th Party secretary general and president of the republic. He added that the establishment of a firm basis for the socialist changes was one of the results of this movement.

Comrade Al-Ahmar also reviewed the political situation in the region, the most important developments and events in it, and the conspiratorial attempts by the hostile imperialist and Zionist forces to peddle the idea of capitulation, subjugate the Arab nation, and impose hegemonial and expansionist plans on it. Comrade Al-Ahmar also reviewed the conspiracy to partition Lebanon by the Zionized isolationist forces, who want to fragment Lebanon and turn it into several entities, a plan in conflict with its people's will, interests, and Arab affiliation.

The assistant Ba'th Party secretary general condemned the massacres committed by the Zionized clique in Lebanese nationalist areas last week—massacres in which many innocent people were killed. Then he referred to the treacherous role being played by the fascist regime in Iraq through its support for the isolationist forces. In light of this, he stressed Syria's firm support for Lebanon and its people in their struggle to escape from the tragedy and the crisis. He said: We support every positive effort for Lebanon's unity and independence, equality among its sons, and an effective national accord through political reform of the present system.

Comrade al-Ahmar discussed the Palestinian uprising and the need to support and prolong it, stressing the firm position of the Ba'th Party and Syria under the leadership of comrade struggler Hafiz al-Asad in opposing plans to harm the Palestinian cause and to peddle the policy of unilateral deals. He also affirmed the country's adherence to the just and comprehensive solution through the convening of a UN-sponsored effective international conference, leading to the withdrawal of Israeli forces from all the occupied Arab territories and the recognition of the Palestinian Arab people's legitimate rights, including their right to repatriation, self-determination, and an independent state.

Comrade al-Ahmar also cited the importance of party and popular action and the need for the Ba'thist comrades to mobilize these masses' energies to strengthen the country's resolve and its ability to face its challenges.

He also stressed the importance of education.

Afghanistan

Kabul-Mujahidin Battle for Jalalabad Continues

Rebels Capture Sorkh Rud Posts

BK2003150889 Hong Kong AFP in English 1444 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Peshawar, Pakistan, March 20 (AFP)—Afghan rebels took Monday three security posts and captured 40 government soldiers in the Sorkh Rud District west of the Afghan city of Jalalabad, resistance sources said. In another attack on a security post near the eastern city's airport the guerillas captured 17 troops, the pro-resistance Afghan Islamic press said. Sources said rebels destroyed a bridge near the Sarowbi area on the highway linking Jalalabad to the capital Kabul in the west. Government forces launched a counter offensive but lost seven tanks in the fighting, the sources said without giving details.

The battle for control of Jalalabad entered its second week Monday, with both the Moscow-backed Kabul government and the Islamic guerrillas suffering heavy casualties, sources said.

The mujahidin also stepped up attacks in the western province of Herat, killing at least 25 soldiers over the weekend as government planes bombed mujahidin positions, resistance sources said. The guerillas destroyed two security posts and killed 21 soldiers Saturday in the northern part of Herat city, the sources said. Four rebels, including one commander, were killed in this attack, the sources said.

In an attack on a military convoy on the route linking Herat with Shindand Airbase, the mujahidin destroyed two tanks killing every one aboard, the sources said.

The mujahidin have for the past few days attacked the Shindand Airbase, which has reportedly been used by government planes flying missions to defend the eastern city of Jalalabad. Government planes carried out retaliatory bombings Sunday, killing eight civilians and wounding 12, the sources said.

The mujahidin ambushed a militia convoy on Herat-Islam Qala highway Saturday and killed five militiamen. They captured three militiamen, a vehicles and some light weapons in the attack, the sources said.

Armed Forces Repulse Attacks

LD2003213689 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] A spokesman for the Armed Forces of the Republic of Afghanistan has told a BIA military correspondent that during the last 24 hours the enemy, in joint efforts with Pakistani military forces and militia, fired more than 4,000 rounds of BM-12, BM-1 missiles, and mortars at Jalalabad city, the airport, and Behsud from behind the enemy ranks. One member of the Armed Forces was martyred and four were wounded. One local person was martyred and seven others, including three children and two women, were wounded. One house was destroyed and a mosque was partially damaged.

The spokesman added that the units and companies of the Armed Forces in Nangarhar Province, responding with retaliatory fire, repulsed enemy attacks with heavy weapons and made them retreat on several fronts. During these operations 25 armed individuals linked to the Pakistani militarists and a number of Pakistani militia were killed. Among the dead were a number of enemy ringleaders and foreign advisers. Forty-five others were wounded, 20 were captured; 3 depots, 9 rocket launchers, 3 mortars, 3 missiles, an air defense rifle, 2 recoilless guns, and an enemy command post were destroyed.

According to another report, mopping up operations carried out in an area 60 km from Makowan Kalay, Qandahar Province, resulted in 11 armed extremists under the protection of the Pakistani militarists being killed and 5 others wounded. About 30,000 rounds of light weapons ammunition, 7 missiles and 27 anti-vehicle mines were seized by the local security forces. Nine trenches, 23 positions, 4 recoilless guns, 1 mortar, and 47 assorted weapons of the enemy were destroyed.

The Armed Forces spokesman added that the situation in other provinces and regions of the country is normal.

Bridge Blown Up on Road to Kabul

BK2103024589 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 21 Mar 89

[Text] Reports from Afghanistan say the mujahidin have launched another attack on Jalalabad, capturing three positions of the Kabul regime and taking about 50 soldiers prisoner. The thrust of the attack was mostly near the airport. According to reports, mujahidin blew up the main bridge on the major highway linking Jalalabad with Kabul and also damaged some tanks that were being sent for repairs. A part of the highway was under the control of the mujahidin in the past 2 days, and the Kabul regime had to send supplies by helicopter to Jalalabad.

A Soviet spokesman claimed that the mujahidin offensive was repulsed.

The president of Afghanistan's interim government, Prof Sibghatullah Mojaddedi, called on his countrymen to work for the reconstruction of the war-ravaged country. In a New Year message in Afghanistan, he urged his countrymen to unite to reconstruct Afghanistan and make it a great and prosperous country. Prof Mojaddedi said the decision of the Islamic Conference Organization to grant Afghanistan's vacant seat to the interim government of Afghanistan has paved the way for the recognition of Afghanistan's Islamic government by other countries of the world.

Rebels Launch New Offensive

OW2103033389 Tokyo KYODO in English 0303 GMT 21 Mar 89

[Text] Islamabad, March 20 KYODO—Afghan mujahidin have launched a fresh attack on the besieged city of Jalalabad, rebel sources in the Peshawar border city said. Up to 15,000 guerrillas were reportedly involved in the latest offensive and their main target was the airport, five kilometers south of the city.

Jalalabad is the second biggest city of Afghanistan and the mujahidin have been trying hard for more than a fortnight to capture the city to make it the headquarters of their recently formed interim government. The Kabul government and Moscow have been accusing Pakistan of supporting the mujahidin in the battle for Jalalabad and claim to have killed up to 4,000 guerrillas in the fighting. Mujahidin sources claim the death toll to be in the vicinity of 400.

Rebel news agency AL-BUNYAN NEWS SERVICE claimed that the guerrillas were moving on the city from all four directions and relief could be brought for the beleaguered government troops only by air.

'Fierce Battle' Raging

BK2103155289 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 21 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Reports from Afghanistan say that a fierce battle is raging around the besieged city of Jalalabad. The mujahidin commanders, who are regularly meeting with each other to finalize arrangements for an early attack on the city, are trying to ensure that common people do not suffer any casualty. A mujahidin commander said that preparations for a new attack on Jalalabad have been completed and that they expect to launch their joint operation from all sides.

The mujahidin have also carried out an effective surprise attack on Kabul security posts in (Karoghi) District of Herat Province, capturing a large quantity of arms and ammunition. [passage omitted]

MiG-27's Cause 'Heavy Casualties'

BK2103161089 Hong Kong AFP in English 1555 GMT 21 Mar 89

[Text] Peshawar, Pakistan, March 21 (AFP)—Afghan resistance guerrillas have set up a coordinated command to launch a four-pronged attack on the strategic eastern city of Jalalabad, resistance sources and diplomats said Tuesday. Western diplomats, citing sources close to the fighting, said that after several days of "diminished intensity" in the three-week-old battle for the city, a resistance "offensive is likely to reume shortly."

Resistance sources here said the Jalalabad front had been divided into four operational districts among the commanders of the seven Afghan resistance parties based in this northwestern Pakistani city on the Afghan border. Senior commanders have been made sector chiefs in the east, west, north and south of the beleagured city, they said.

Commander Mehmud of the Hezb-e Eslami (Khalis) group had been put in charge of Nangarhar Province, of which Jalalabad is the capital, they added. Mujahidin have been equipped with radio equipment for better coordination, they said. The diplomats said a lack of field communications equipment had been affecting the mujahidin's tactical operations. Mujahidin had broken through Soviet-backed Afghan Government defenses and entered Jalalabad airport from the south, resistance sources said. The attack on Jalalabad had previously concentrated on the eastern side of the city.

"There is no indication of an early end to the battle," a diplomat said, adding that a war of attrition would mean heavy casualties.

The mujahidin continue to rely on equipment suited for guerrilla operations rather than for conventional attacks, the diplomats said, and lack mine-clearing equipment needed to attack heavily-mined positions. They said the mujahidin had had "no respite" from intense air raids. Initially, MiG fighters made inaccurate high altitude runs, but they have now begun low-level swift attacks with "far more accuracy," they said. The guerrillas, while saying their shoulder-fired Stinger missiles were effective, admit that MiG-27s have caused heavy casualties. "The mujahidin generally remain highly vulnerable to these air attacks," a diplomat said.

Diplomats said the rebel offensive began in a "disorganized manner" and they had failed to coordinate joint pressure from all sides, enabling Afghan government forces to concentrate their defence response "to some extent." They noted that the attack began at a time when the Najibullah government could focus air and other support on the defence of Jalalabad. "No other major mujahidin operation was underway elsewhere in the country principally because of heavy snow or mud which continue to hamper guerrilla operations," one diplomat said.

The mujahidin were also unable to completely prevent Kabul troops from resupplying Jalalabad by air or overland during the early phases of the offensive, they said. But they denied the rebels had suffered any reverses. Resistance sources also strongly denied a Radio Moscow report Tuesday that the Kabul-Jalalabad highway had been reopened. They said a counter-offensive on Monday had been "foiled." Government troops had to retreat after losing 11 tanks and military vehicles and the only land route from Kabul to Jalalabad remained cut, they said.

Diplomats said morale was high among the mujahidin and that they continued to assault Afghan Government garrisons around the city, units still holding part of the airport and some posts near the city.

The flow of refugees from Jalalabad continues, the diplomats said. They said the mujahidin were assisting their flight via the eastern Towr Kham-Jalalabad road, target of some of the most intense bombing. Casualties among the fleeing civilians have been high, the diplomats said.

But if the mujahidin are able to cut off both overland and air supply and if coordinated pressure on all sides of the city can be maintained, "time would appear to be on the side of the mujahidin," one diplomat said.

Meanwhile, sources in Kabul said that the Afghan Army had fired a salvo of eight Soviet-supplied Scud surface-to-surface missiles from the capital Tuesday in support of government troops defending Jalalabad.

Afghan President Najibullah also called on the United Nations late Monday to monitor alleged Pakistani involvement in the attack on Jalalabad. The Afghan Government has said 3,000 Pakistani militiamen are taking part in the siege of Jalalabad, 150 kilometres (90 miles) east of the Afghan capital. Jalalabad, only 75 kilometres (45 miles) from Pakistan, has traditionally been a stronghold of the ruling communist People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA).

Military Situation in Provinces, Capital Updated

Rebels Encircle Herat City

BK2003161989 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Reports say the mujahidin in Afghanistan, after closing the highways leading to the Soviet Union through Towraghondi and Shindand in the south, have encircled the third major city of Herat. The mujahidin have inflicted heavy casualties by well-planned attacks on the Kabul regime positions at Chashmeh near Ghurian and (Sumali). Nearly 500 forces of the Kabul regime surrendered to the mujahidin. The mujahidin also captured large quantities of weapons and ammunition, 4 mortar guns and 12 machine guns. The mujahidin attacked the Salmeh Dam and captured the dam along with 4 tanks and 20 light machine guns as well as large amount of weapons. During another operation carried out near the Soviet (?border), more than 300 Kabul forces, including 10 officers, surrendered to the mujahidin along with tanks, weapons and a large amount of ammunition.

The mujahidin launched operations in Nangarhar, Baghlan, Paktia and Qandahar provinces as well. Nearly 60 soldiers of the Kabul regime were killed and 600 injured. Fierce fighting is continuing in Jalalabad and around Jalalabad airport.

90 Killed in Kabul Bombings

BK2103102689 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1000 GMT 21 Mar 89

[Text] Reports from Afghanistan say that about 90 civilians, mostly women and children, have been killed as a result of heavy bombing raids by Kabul regime aircraft on several villages along the Salang highway. The mujahidin retaliated by attacking a caravan coming from the Soviet Union with arms, ammunition, and foodstuffs. The mujahidin also attacked (Nabila), killing more than 150 Kabul regime soldiers and capturing 25 tanks and armored vehicles.

56 Rebels Killed in Qandahar

LD1703234589 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] The units and subunits of the heroic Armed Forces, who are ready to make every devotion and sacrifice to safeguard the country's territorial integrity, heighten the compatriot's interests, and restore nationwide peace and security, remained in their previous positions for the past 24 hours. In some regions where groups, protected by Pakistani militarists, embarked on subversive actions, they were confronted with crushing blows inflicted by the security forces and suffered losses of life and materials.

The BIA military section, quoting a competent Armed Forces source, described as follows the military situation in the past 24 hours:

In the areas northeast of Tari Kowt region in Qandahar Province 56 warmongering extremists linked with Pakistani militarists circles were crushed and one ammunition depot was set on fire.

According to another report, the armed extremist groups pounded heavy weapons fires on residential regions and security posts in the area surrounding Grishk, Helmand Province, which did not cause any loss of life. The artillery forces fired at the warmonger's positions, as a result of which eight armed men attached to the so-called Islamic Party of Afghanistan were killed and a large number of their heavy and light weapons were destroyed.

The report adds that as a result of mopping up operations and searches in the surroundings of Enjil District, Herat Province, eight men of the armed opposition groups were killed and seven were wounded.

During these operations one mortar and five light weapons were destroyed by blows inflicted by the security forces.

A number of units and subunits of the 8th Division of the Pakistani Armed Forces, who also took part in the battles around Jalalabad city, were being stationed in the past few days along the border in the vicinity of Paktia Province.

Najibullah Delivers New Year's Message

LD2003212989 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1630 GMT 20 Mar 89

[New year message by President Najibullah, general secretary of the PDPA Central Committee, date and place not given—live or recorded]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Dear compatriots, sisters and brothers: As I am speaking to you the last hour of the current year passes. We are entering the new year. Allow me to present my sincere congratulations on the arrival of the new year and the ancient festival of Nawruz to all Afghan families, the Pashtun and Baluch brothers and all Muslims of the fraternal Islamic countries. In the past year we witnessed important events in our country. We have and continue to experience difficult times. Among the incidents and events are developments that are the results of long years of struggle and the gains of a decade. These gains have become the cause of important political and social changes in the country.

The principal characteristic of the past year is the humane and courageous national reconciliation policy to end the fratricidal war. The Geneva accords, which are the great gain and achievement of the national reconciliation policy, were concluded after 6 years of talks. They have been sincerely observed by the Republic of Afghanistan. The withdrawal of Soviet units began and was completed this year.

In the past year the readiness of the Afghan Government to establish a coalition with the opposition was stated and direct and indirect contacts were made with the alliance of seven and alliance of eight and with personalities residing in Europe and the United States, and a fixed number of seats were reserved for them in the country's parliament.

The Republic of Afghanistan, based on love for the homeland and the defense of the independence, territorial integrity, and common destiny of Afghans, invited all opponents to take part in the coalition government in proportion to their capacities and possibilities and to prepare conditions for the creation of a coalition government with broader bases.

On the international level, the peaceful proposals of the Republic of Afghanistan to attract economic assistance and permanent demilitarization were made public. The Afghan Government's peaceful intentions were reflected through ambassadors and peace envoys and through the letters sent to the world's heads of state. The Republic of Afghanistan has sought and proposed methods and ways to maintain peace and cease bloodshed.

However, the opponents, instead of compromising and ending the fratricidal war, publicized slogans supporting the continuation of the war. And the Pakistani militarists are waiting to witness the death of the last Afghan. The armed opposition extremists, in response to every proposal by the Republic of Afghanistan, have challenged them with force and have refused to change their warmongering stance. Throughout the year, they have faced the Islamic and Afghan voice of national reconciliation with the shocking explosions of rockets and the shells from heavy weapons, and have drawn blood and soiled hundreds of Afghans.

At this moment, when our compatriots are preparing to welcome the new year, I pray for the souls of all martyrs who fought for the homeland, wish them God's blessing, and offer condolences to their families and those left behind.

Muslim and faithful compatriots, over the past year we and the gallant people of Afghanistan, left behind difficult days and a harsh winter. The extremists shouted that they would continue fighting as long as the Soviet Union's forces were in the country. Now that not even one Soviet soldier remains, they have intensified fratricide and tried to suffocate our people by imposing war and an economic blockade of cities.

The Goverment of the Republic of Afghanistan declared the state of emergency on 19 February. It was supported by our compatriots. Recent incidents and events have shown that without these measures and preparations by the Afghan Government and the Peoples Democratic Party of Afghanistan [PDPA] and its political allies, the extremists could have indulged in subversion and inflicted many deaths and much damage on our compatriots. As a result of these measures and the state of emergency, thousands of kilograms of explosives, bombs, rockets, and lethal weapons were captured in Kabul.

The attack planned against Herat was foiled. Extremist attacks on Qandahar were repulsed. The gallant and brave Afghan Armed Forces defended and resisted extensive extremist attacks—backed by Pakistani soldiers and officers—on Jalalabad.

The days when the shortage of bread, basic goods, and fuel, and all those difficulties that were imposed on our people by the extremists have passed. But our nation's heroism and the patience of our people, who have been the true supporters of the Afghan Government during these difficult days, will remain in the memory of history. Thank you, compatriots and dear Kabul residents, who showed Afghan and Islamic patience, valor, and resistence against all the warmongerers' pressures.

With the withdrawal of the Soviet forces, contrary to the claims of the armed extremist opposition, fighting has intensified in Afghanistan. Thousands of rockets have been fired on Jalalabad. You know that Pakistani officers, commandos and militia, and other Pakistani Armed Forces are stationed behind the lines at Jalalabad, and every day they supply fresh forces equipped with weapons and ammunition. Deceived and unaware of the realities, the rank and file extremists are the victims of their gun muzzles. The defense and resistance of the brave people of Nangarhar Province, the brave members of the Armed Forces, the struggler ranks of the PDPA, the hero airmen of the country's Air Force, the units of the Nangarhar forces, and the volunteers from various parts of the country who have gone to the Nangarhar front, and the people from different parts of the country who have sent financial aid, all these people have again proved that Afghans are alive and will defend their country against foreigners.

Befor now the enemies blamed the Afghan Government for stationing a foreign army in the country. But they themselves want to bring a government made in Rawalpindi mo the country, with the help of a foreign army at the price of thousands of our compatriots' lives.

They want to implement the plan to annex Afghanistan with Pakistan under the pretext of a confederation with Pakistan. Similar incidents existed in our country's history. These measures are copies of scenarios engineered by the MacNaughtens and the Shahshujas in the form of Pakistani military intelligence and leaders of the opposition. There is no doubt that a number of the opposition, like Shahshuja, want to deliver to Pakistan part of our country that is the craddle of many patriotic holy warriors in return for power and dominance. The opposition did not even hold its shura in Peshawar or Quetta, where Afghan refugees live, because they are parts of Pashtun and Baluchistan. It prefered Rawalpindi in the Pubjab.

The fact of the matter is that the heads of the extremist forces had no authority to make that decision, and the showcase shura was under the constant control of Pakistan's military intelligence. They have no place among the refugees either. A number of commanders boycotted the shura and returned to their country. They did not lay the slightest importance on a large number of commanders who bore the brunt of the war. The eight party formation based in Iran also called the shura artificial and boycotted it. Personalities invited from the United States and Europe returned in despair. Eventually the shura ended with a few leaders named as members of the interim government.

Every day brings new evidence of the dependence of this organization on the militarists of Pakistan. They go to the extent that they have changed the color of the Afghan flag, which is the honor of every compatriot, and have included in it the white and green colors of Pakistan's flag.

Their action is treason against the national honor and the heroism of our forefathers, which are reflected in the colors of our country's flag.

We are sincerely meeting all the pledges made to our people and the world and are independently protecting and safeguarding the homeland, which has been left to us by our fathers and forefathers. I address all my Afghan brothers, whereever they are: Our sacred homeland, which is the common home of all Afghans, has become the victim of the familiar aggression of Pakistani militarists. Raise your voice of indignation and criticism against the aggressors. With patriotic, Islamic, and Afghan work and activity struggle against the warmongers. Rise in the sacred national jihad against the aggressors with power, strength, and Afghan pride.

Toiling farmers, welcome the auspicious farm festival, during which all the people of Afghanistan will be praying before almighty God for peace, tranquility, and the cessation of war with work, planting, and cultivation. Make your agricultural lands and gardens more fruitful with your untiring work and efforts. Safeguard your vigilance before the enemy's conspiracies, trickery, and warmongering. The heroic Afghan Armed Forces, the courageous defenders of Jalalabad and other provinces, as the people are celebrating the ancient new year festival you are in the hot trenches of war, courageously defending every inch of sacred Afghan soil. You are reviving the memories of those who made sacrifices for the country's independence and freedom. You are the inheritors of the liberating epics and the strugglers of the Afghan people. You are the proud sons of the beloved homeland of Afghans. Our people and history are proud of your names.

Courageous and heroic personnel of the Armed Forces, on behalf of the PDPA Central Committee and the Afghan Government, on my own behalf, and on behalf of every appreciative individual of this homeland, we sincerely congratulate you on the arrival of the new year. I pray for your victory in this sacred jihad, the sacred jihad in defense of the homeland.

PDPA members, political allies, sympathisers, and patriotic people of Afghanistan, assist the Afghan Armed Forces in defending the homeland and safeguarding the gains of the national reconciliation policy.

Armed opposition commanders inside the country, in the course of 10 years you, for some reason, have put up armed resistance against the government and have carried the heavy burden of this war on your shoulders. Now all the reasons for continuing the war have been eliminated. The Pakistani militarists want to stab the Afghan nation in the back and eliminate Afghans. Look back at past experiences and draw your own conclusions. A war of brother against brother cannot be called a jihad. The best jihad is a struggle to defend the homeland and to maintain peace in the common Afghan home.

History has shown that when the country and people are threatened by a foreign invasion the Afghan nation transforms into a united power and single movement and stands as one against the aliens in their jihad. With the military-political changes in the country and the fact that Pakistani militarists have taken aim against the sacred santuary of Afghans, it is incumbent on you to resist the invaders with the arms you possess.

Dear compatriots, the Republic of Afghanistan will remain free, independent, and nonaligned with a tradition of peace and friendship. We will continue the peace-loving policy of the Republic of Afghanistan. We desire mutually beneficial relations with all countries. We follow and support the principles of good-neighborly relations, noninterference in internal affairs, respect for independence and national sovereignty, and the right of nations to self-determination.

Taking this opportunity, we call on the United Nations to employ serious efforts to ensure that Pakistan implements the the Geneva accords.

Pakistan has not yet taken the smallest step toward this end, which was stated in the agreements and the resolution of 43rd UN session. The United Nations Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan sent many observers to Hayratan, Towr Ghar, Keleft, Shir Khan, Kabul airport, and various Afghan cities as the Soviet forces were withdrawing to supervise the pullout process. Now it is high time observers were sent to a number of areas along the border with Pakistan: Chartani Ghashay, Towr Kham, Teri Mangal, Parachinar, (Miranshah), and Chaman, to constantly supervise the situation. Any type of indifference to a violation of the Geneva accords and ignorance of the blatant infringements of the principles [passage indistinct] will remain open to those in the opposition who have separated from those who continue fratricide, and who will listen to the call of peace and the call of their compatriots' consciences.

In conclusion, I again congratulate all my fellow countrymen on the new year and I plead with God, the lofty, who watches our deeds and knows the overt and covert intentions of his creatures, to enable us to restore peace in our country in line with the tenets of the sacred religion of Islam and the principles of Islamic and Afghan brotherhood. I hope the new year will be a year of great national and international successes and a year of peace and the cessation of fratricide in Afghanistan. I want the victory of the Afghan nation and its patriotic people to come from God, whose position is gigantic. Success comes from God.

Najibullah Addresses State Security Officials

LD1703224389 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Esteemed Najibullah, president of Afghanistan and supreme commander of the Armed Forces, met this afternoon with a number of Ministry of State Security officials at the conference hall. The BIA military correspondent reports that Najibullah was welcomed on arrival by State Security Minister Lieutenant General Ghulam Faruq Ya'qubi and the leadership of the ministry. Then esteemed Najibullah went to the hall where he was received with warm applause by the audience.

At the opening Brigadier General Muhammad 'Arif Sakhara, deputy minister of state security, presented a brief report about the combat readiness of the ministry's staff and also about their heroism and epics at the Nangarhar front, where they are presently fighting with self-sacrifice against invaders and the traitorous extremists. He expressed happiness at meeting between esteemed President Najibullah, supreme commander of the Armed Forces, with the staff of the Ministry of State Security and asked him to deliver his speech.

Esteemed Najibullah made a comprehensive statement, specifying the tasks and responsibilities of the Ministry of State Security in the present complicated situation in the country when the Pakistani militarists and the extremists, with the support of a number of reactionary circles, have sinister aims toward the national sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of our homeland. Addressing them he said that it was his pleasure that they meet again. In principle the reason for this meeting constitutes the [word indistinct] of the staff of the Ministry of State Security for the defense of the homeland.

Esteemed Najibullah added that with the change in the situation in the country and with the existence of new conditions, our tasks take new forms and new dimensions. Our approach to the new situation in the country should be changed. You saw the limited military contingents of the Soviet Union return to their homeland. With the power of the Afghan people and the PDPA, relying on the power of our heroic Armed Forces, political allies, and other Afghan patriots, we adopted the burden of rendering the heavy and proud duties of the homeland. At a time when we are living under extraordinary conditions, this situation demands from every one of us an extraordinary approach, extraordinary work, extraordinary readiness, and extraordinary sacrifices.

An official of the Ministry of State Security, on behalf of his colleagues, promised every self-sacrifice. He assured the president of Afghanistan and the supreme commander of the Armed Forces that the staff of the Ministry of State Security will spare no sacrifice in independently defending the independence, national sovereignty, and territorial integrity of the homeland. They will stand at the forefront of the struggle against the invaders, aggressors and home wreckers. Thus by shedding their blood they are making a further contribution to the tree of freedom.

Najibullah Visits Armed Forces, Gives Promotions

LD1803190289 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] This morning at 0900 esteemed Najibullah, president of Afghanistan and commander in chief of the Armed Forces, visited the Armed Forces central maintenance workshop, the armored force, and the military academy. He was accompanied by Lieutenant General Shahnawaz Tanay, minister of defense; and Lieutenant

General Ghulam Faruq Ya'qubi, minister of state security. During the visit Lieutenant Colonel (Marjan), chief of Armed Forces central maintenance workshop, gave a comprehensive briefing on the fulfillment of the workshop's work plan, which drew the interest of esteemed Najibullah. Colonel (Maluk) reported on the combat readiness of the armored force.

Esteemed Najibullah gave specific instructions to the related units on better organizing work, improving the level of work in the workshop, enhancing training and education, and further enhancing combat preparations.

According to another report, the esteemed president issued extraordinary promotions to these units for merit in the discharge of their duties. They were also awarded medals of the Republic of Afghanistan. Similarly Lieutenant Colonel (Marjan) was promoted to brigadier general by the esteemed president's decree, and Colonel (Maluq) was promoted to lieutenant colonel.

Senate Message to Opposition Commanders

LD1903064689 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0457 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] Kabul, March 18, BAKHTAR—The members of the Senate, upper house, of the National Assembly in a message to the opposition commanders have called upon them to join the policy of national reconciliation. Following the decrees of the holy Koran and in compliance with the worthwhile traditions of the Muslim people, the message asks them to stop fighting and to resolve their problems and differences through dialogue.

We are, continues the message, your brothers. Please do not listen to the words of the enemies who like Rushdie insult Islam and are going to provoke fighting among us in order to be killed and then to make news of it. In accordance with a holy verse which says that if a devil bring you a report, ask for reason and not to harm anybody without the authenticity of the report, otherwise you will be repentful. [sentence as received]

Let us abide by the holy verses of the holy Koran which commands that obey the God and his prophet, do not oppose with each other which causes to weaken you. If we are united no power will be able to defeat us, concludes the message.

National Front Board Appoints Vice Chairman

LD1603235889 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] The extraordinary session of the Executive Board of the Afghan National Front Central Council was held yesterday under the chairman of 'Abdul Rahim Hatif, council chairman.

In addition to the issues on the session's agenda, they also discussed organizational issues. A number of Executive Board members were released and assigned other duties. The Executive Board unanimously approved the appointment of 'Abdul Qudus Ghorbandi as vice chairman of the National Front Central Council and Fedah Muhammad Dehnishin as responsible secretary of the National Front Central Council.

'Abdul Rahim Hatif spoke at the session about the responsibilities of the vice chairman and responsible secretary and wished them success in executing their crucial duties.

Mojaddedi Predicts Jalalabad, Kabul To Fall Soon

PM2103104289 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 19 Mar 89 p 4

[Hamid al-Huwaymani report: "Mojaddedi Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: Jalalabad Will Fall Within Days"]

[Excerpt] Peshawar, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, news agencies—In an exclusive statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, Shaykh Sibghatullah Mojaddedi, president of the Islamic state of Afghanistan, announced that Jalalabad will fall to the Afghan mujahidin within 3-4 days. He also said that the problem facing the mujahidin now in Jalalabad is the use of fragmentation bombs dropped by jets from high altitudes beyond the range of the Stinger missiles available to the mujahidin. As a result, the number of the wounded has increased considerably among the mujahidin forces besieging Jalalabad. He added: The mujahidin government does not intend to move into Jalalabad after it is captured, because our target is the capital (Kabul), which will also fall in the near future.

Shaykh Sibghatullah Mojaddedi said that Islamic Afghanistan will not interfere in the internal affairs of any country in the world, and at the same time will not allow any state to interfere in the internal affairs of the Islamic state of Afghanistan, indicating his government's eagerness to maintain good and staunch relations with all the world's states within the framework of Islamic law. [passage omitted]

Mojadeddi Says Delegation To Visit Iran

LD2003182789 Tehran IRNA in English 1730 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Islamabad, March 20, IRNA—The president of the interim mujahidin government today expressed hope the Iran-based coalition of eight Afghan groups would revise its stand and participate in the newly established government.

Sibghatullah Mojaddedi told IRNA the Pakistan based seven party alliance would soon despatch a high powered delegation to Iran to hold talks with the Iran-based coalition.

He termed the seat given to the mujahidin government in the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) as a "great victory" for the Afghan people and expressed hope it would be granted a seat in the United Nations Organization as well.

Mojadeddi said the mujahidin had been forced to launch military operations against the Afghan Government forces following their refusal to surrender peacefully.

A major part of the Jalalabad airport is now under control of the Aghan mujahidin who are continuing fighting to fully liberate it, he said.

He said the mujahidin would welcome "health ties" with the Soviet Union if Moscow compensated for the losses, contributed to Afghanistan's reconstruction and quitted interfering in its internal affairs.

Hikmatyar on Securing International Support

PM1703151689 Jeddah 'UKAZ in Arabic 13 Mar 89 p 16

[Interview with Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, Afghan mujahidin "foreign minister" by Muhammad al-Khadri in Riyadh—date not given]

[Excerpts] [Al-Khadri] First of all, what is your reaction to the Saudi Kingdom's recognition of the Afghan mujahidin government, which was in fact the first official recognition of the new Afghan state?

[Hikmatyar] Actually we expected this recent stance from the kingdom because it was the first state to support our struggle and it continued to do so throughout the long years of our struggle. We knew all these years that the Afghan Islamic cause topped the kingdom's list of priorities. [passage omitted]

[Al-Khadri] Apart from the Islamic states, there are other states which supplied aid to the mujahidin. Have you discussed the question of recognition of the new Afghan Government by these states?

[Hikmatyar] There are a number of states which helped us politically in our resistance against the Russian invasion. We can now see, however, that some of them are not in favor of a mujahidin Islamic government. That is why they have not recognized the mujahidin government and have set preconditions for recognizing the government which, as they well know, represents all groups of Afghan people.

[Al-Khadri] What does the attitude of these states mean?

[Hikmatyar] It means that they wanted the Soviets to withdraw from Afghanistan but did not want a mujahidin Islamic government after the liberation of Afghanistan. That is the only logical explanation of their position. They recognize governments that come to power by a military coup and they recognize single party governments. Our government comprises several parties, represents the entire people, and controls over 95 percent of the country's territory. [passage omitted]

[Al-Khadri] Do the preconditions of these states for recognition of the mujahidin government include the establishment of a secular state, the return of former King Muhammad Zahir Shah, or the continued presence in the government of Najibullah or some of his cabinet members?

[Hikmatyar] They have not spelled out their preconditions in that way but we know that they lie within that context, although they have not openly said so. Some want a coalition government with Najibullah, although they have not openly said so. They speak of a broader-based government but I believe they mean a coalition government with Najibullah. Others want the people acceptable to them to be included in the government and they even say that these people must be at the head of the government if they are to recognize it.

I want to say here that we do not need their recognition. God willing, in a matter of weeks we will establish our government in Kabul. We will announce it in the capital and, God willing, everyone will recognize it. [passage omitted]

[Al-Khadri] Is the problem of representation of the eight parties based in Iran, in the current goverment, still there or has it been solved?

[Hikmatyar] Let me explain that the present government is a provisional government for a specific transitional period. So its formation does not mean that the matter of party representation, including the eight parties in question, has been finally resolved. In 5 months' time general elections will be held and an elected shura will be formed on the basis of the election results. Whoever wins the majority seats will form the government. Let me emphasize that the [present] government represents everyone. All the parties and organizations respect this government which has been chosen by all groups.

As far as the eight parties are concerned, the problem of their representation in the government has not yet been resolved. They have agreed to hold discussions on this matter to find a compromise solution satisfactory to all sides. They will soon send a delegation to Pakistan. Agreement has been reached with them on most matters. All that remains is the number of ministers that will represent them in the government. That will be discussed with a view to finding a solution.

[Al-Khadri] Do you think a solution will be found to this problem and that differences will be resolved in the near future?

[Hikmatyar] I believe this matter will be resolved soon. The differences will be easily resolved because they are over secondary matters. They will be overcome in the coming period, God willing. [passage omitted]

[Al-Khadri] What if former King Muhammad Zahir Shah wanted to join the government in one way or another? Is the way open for him to do so, through a certain party for example?

[Hikmatyar] The agreement on a mujahidin government means that the case of the former king is over and done with. He no longer has a place in Afghanistan. The name of King Muhammad Zahir Shah has not been suggested by any party. That means that all parties reject the idea of his return. [passage omitted]

[Al-Khadri] Will there be another round of talks between you and the Soviet Union?

[Hikmatyar] Before the Soviet withdrawal we began negotiations with them, but we decided to halt them when we discovered that we were going around in a vicious circle and that it was futile to continue the talks since they insisted that Najibullah's government remain in office—a flagrant interference in the Afghan people's affairs.

[Al-Khadri] You did not participate in Al-Ta'if's meeting. Did you have a particular viewpoint on that matter?

[Hikmatyar] My own personal view was that the meeting would not achieve what we wanted to achieve, because I knew the Soviet position. That is why I did not attend the meeting, but I went along with the wish of the majority which agreed to hold the meeting. [passage omitted]

[Al-Khadri] Do you expect Soviet interference in support of the lackey government if Kabul falls to the mujahinin, bearing in mind that it left that government large quantities of ammunition and equipment?

[Hikmatyar] I believe that Moscow will not make the same mistake again. I consider the chances of such interference very slim. Aid alone will not help the Najibullah government because it has enough arms and resources. Its problem is manpower, since nobody wants to be part of its lackey army. The faithful Afghan people cannot possibly fight for communism. That is the Najibullah government's problem and the Russians cannot resolve it. I believe the Najibullah government has only a few weeks left. God willing, it will fall in the coming weeks.

[Al-Khadri] But Najibullah has recently contacted some tribes for support and backing.

[Hikmatyar] That will not do him any good. What he has done is only a propaganda ploy. The position of the Afghan tribes was firm and clear from the beginning. The lackey government has been trying for 11 years to tempt the tribes and secure their support, but it has failed. Now that government is dying, so how could anyone support a government that brought disasters and calamities to the Afghan people?

[Al-Khadri] Have you thought about the political future of Najibullah and his government after the liberation of Kabul, with God's help?

[Hikmatyar] We have declared a general amnesty, and Najibullah and his colleagues could benefit from it if they submit to the Afghan people's will and lay down their arms and surrender to the mujahinin. We will give them safe passage, as the prophet did when he conquered Mecca. We will enter Kabul with that idea. We have no intention of seeking revenge.

[Al-Khadri] What results do you expect from the Islamic foreign ministers conference?

[Hikmatyar] I expect support for the mujahinin government and recognition by all the Islamic states, with the Afghan seat given to the government which represents the will of the Afghan people, namely, the mujahinin government.

Foreign Minister Summarizes Visit to India

LD2003095889 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0433 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Kabul, March 19, BAKHTAR: Abdul Wakil, minister of foreign Affairs of the Republic of Afghanistan returned home, from a working visit to India on Wednesday.

On his arrival in Kabul International Airport the minister of foreign affairs of Afghanistan granted a press interview to domestic and foreign journalists.

Repyling to a question raised by BAKHTAR correspondent, A. Wakil said that the Afghan delegation during its stay in India, had separate meetings with Rajiv Gandhi, the Indian prime minister, Narosimha Rao, minister of foreign affairs, Natwar Sing, minister of state for foreign affairs, and S.K. Singh, foreign secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of India. The Indian side was informed of the new political and military developments in the Republic of Afghanistan, he added, both sides expressed their satisfaction on expansion of friendly relations between the two countries.

The Indian side expressed its all sided support to the political soloution of the situation around Afghanistan.

The Indian side expressed concern over the recent developments in eastern part of the Republic of Afghanistan.

Similarly, the Afghan foreign minister went on to say, our Indian friends expressed readiness to help the Republic of Afghanistan through the United Nations, and on a bilateral basis.

UN Notified of Pakistani 'Violations' of Accords

Notices 308-313

LD1603145189 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0415 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Kabul, March 15, BAKHTAR—Six notices 308 to 313 [as received] of the Republic of Afghanistan on flagrant violations by Pakistan from paragraphs 4, 8, 11 and 12, Article 2, Document Number One of the Geneva accords were submitted by the Liaison Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Office of the United Nations Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan (UNGOMAP) on Tuesday.

Strict and authentic information on Pakistani violations of the provisions of the Geneva accords including dispatch of Pakistani militias and commandos in the territory of the Republic of Afghanistan for taking part along with the extremists in plunderous activities here, training of extremists in the Pakistani camps, arming of extremists with modern armaments including ground to ground rockets and other instances of Pakistani violations are given in the notices.

The notices ask UNGOMAP that on the basis of paragraph 7, Document Number 4 of the Geneva accords assess the said violations and convey results of its findings to the concerned sides.

Notices 314-317

LD1703095989 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0415 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Kabul, March 16, BAKHTAR: Notices number 314, 315, 316, and 317 of the Republic of Afghanistan on irresponsible violations by Pakistan of the provisions of the Geneva accords were submitted to the office of the United Nations Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan (UNGOMAP) here on Wednesday.

In the notices strict and authentic information on tens of flagrant violations of that country from the said accords are given. Attention of UNGOMAP is drawn to the dispatch of Pakistani militias and commandos in Nangarhar Province and their active participation in the extremists plunderous activities carried out in that part of the Republic of Afghanistan these days.

Concern is also expressed in the notice number 316 that despite the repeated demands of the Republic of Afghanistan the UNGOMAP, due to the obstacles created by Pakistan, is not yet succeeded to create permanent observatory posts in the frontier.

To prevent dispatch of the Pakistani militias and commandos, which is in complete contradiction with the norms of international law and Geneva accords, in the territory of the Republic of Afghanistan the UNGOMAP is once again urged to erect UN observatory posts in the frontier areas of the two countries immediately.

Notices 318-320

LD1803131789 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0421 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Kabul, March 17, BAKHTAR—The Afghan Foreign Ministry handed three more protest notices, 318th up to 320th to the UN Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan, UNGOMAP, stationed in Kabul listing further Pakistani violations of the Geneva agreements.

The notices accused Pakistan, among other things, of continuing to commit acts of armed aggression against Afghanistan, by sending its regular forces and militias, armed tribal groups into the Afghan territory to attack Jalalabad, capital of Nangarhar Province, along with extremists.

The notices have drawn the attention of UNGOMAP to the despatch of different types of weapons including surface-to-surface missiles dispatched from Pakistan to the related areas of Paghman District. These lethal weapons were detected and seized by the Afghan Armed Forces on March 15.

The UNGOMAP office in Kabul has been requested to investigate into the matter in accordance with item 8, Document No. 4 of the Geneva accords and to inform the sides concerned of the findings.

Notices 321-323

LD1903064189 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0433 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] Kabul, March 18, BAKHTAR—Notices number 321, 322 and 323 of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Afghanistan on blatant and repeated violations by Pakistan of the provisions of the Geneva accords especially from paragraph 8, 11 and 12, Article 2, Document Number One of the said were submitted to the office of the United Nations Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan (UNGOMAP) here on Friday.

In the notice number 323 while mentioning direct participation of the Pakistani soldiers and militias in the plunderous activities of extremists in Jalalabad it is further added that presently 50 per cent of extremists' logistic supplies are met by the 18th Pakistani Military Division and the other 50 per cent by the 11th Division of that country.

In the notice it is also specified that the five documents of the Geneva Accords are of equal values and the high contracting parties are bound to observe them completely. But, some circles including Pakistan pretend as if the accords are only involved in the return of the Soviet limited military contingents from Afghanistan back home.

Through resorting to such deceits and tricks it has broadened dimension of its military interventions in the internal affairs of the Republic of Afghanistan.

Total instances of the Pakistani voiolations of the provisions of the Geneva accords so far conveyed to the UNGOMAP reach to 2876 cases.

Notices 324-328

LD2003095689 Kabul BAKHTAR in English
0430 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Kabul, March 19, BAKHTAR—Notices number 324 to 328 of the Republic of Afghanistan on violations by Pakistan of the provisions of the Geneva accords were submitted by the Liaison Office of that ministry to the office of the UN Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan (UNGOMAP) on Saturday.

Strict information on the Michni Fort and Khajuri military training camps, located in the environs of Peshawar, where members of the so-called Hezb-e Eslami are trained are given in the notice number 324. In the notice it is also pointed out that extremists are frequenting tens of such camps in the Pakistani territory.

Attention of UNGOMAP on the rocket attacks of extremists on the residential areas of the capital on March 16 which resulted to the killing of 10 civilians and injuries of 6 others is directed by notice number 325. The notice further adds that the flow of the American armaments through Pakistan to extremists cause human and material losses here.

Arrest of two Pakistani spies which proves undeniable interference of that country in the internal affairs of the Republic of Afghanistan and flagrant violations of the provisions of the Geneva accords is mentioned in notice number 326.

A long list on extremists long-range rocket, morter and artillery attacks on the populated areas of the country is given in 327 notice to UNGOMAP. The notice adds that extremists commit such acts with the direct assistance of Pakistan.

The notices ask UNGOMAP to investigate the mentioned Pakistani violations and convey results of its findings to the related sides and representative of the UN secretary general.

Notices 328-331

LD2103092189 Kabul BAKHTAR in English
0415 GMT 21 Mar 89

[Text] Kabul, March 20, BAKHTAR—Notices number, 328 to 331, of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Afghanistan on violations by Pakistan of the provisions of the Geneva accords especially paras 3-4, 5-8 and 11, Article 2, Document Number One were submitted to the office of the UN Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan (UNGOMAP) here on Sunday.

In the said notices adequate information on the existence of military training camps for extremists in the Pakistani territory, dispatch of caravans of arms and ammunition and military advisors in the Republic of Afghanistan, which escalate fratricidal war and bloodshed here, are given.

In the notice number 328 attention of the UNGOMAP is drawn to the ever increasing participation of the Pakistani militias, soldiers and Pakistani spying services in the activities against the sovereign state of the Republic of Afghanistan in Nangarhar Province. The notice further adds that while dimensions of the Pakistani interventions in the internal affairs of Afghanistan are broadening, the Government of Pakistan claims that, as if, citizens of Pakistan are not participating in the anti-state activities in the Republic of Afghanistan.

Arrest of two Pakistani spies, Mohammed Ashraf from special Pakistani intelligence and Mohammad Afzal from CID [Central Intelligence Division] of that country is an undeniable prove of the Pakistani wicked interferences, which completely contradict provisions of the Geneva accords, in the internal affairs of Afghanistan.

Culture, Science Protocol Signed With GDR

LD1703101189 Kabul BAKHTAR in English
0421 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Kabul, March 16, BAKHTAR—A protocol on scientific and cultural cooperation for 1989-1990 between the Republic of Afghanistan [RA] and the German Democratic Republic was signed here on Wednesday. Providing to the protocol the sides will mutually cooperate in the areas of general, higher, technical and civil educations and sport. On the Afghan side the protocol was signed by Ahmad Bashir Roygar, minister of information and culture of the RA and on the German side was signed by Kraft Bumbal, ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary of the GDR in Kabul.

Wolasi Jirgah Refugee Commission Head Killed

LD1903203489 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari
1600 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Excerpt] We have learned with sorrow that 'Abdullah Hasin, son of 'Abdul Karim, the elected representative of election ward 218 in Shindand District, Herat Province and head of the Wolasi Jirgah Commission on Returnees Affairs, was martyred in an enemy mine explosion. [passage omitted]

Bangladesh

Ershad Reallocates Portfolios of 3 Ministers

BK2003160189 Dhaka Domestic Service in English
1530 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] President Ershad has reallocated the portfolios of one deputy prime minister and two other ministers. Mr Ziauddin Ahmed has been appointed as cabinet minister retaining the charge of the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism. The deputy prime minister, Professor M.A. Matin, has been given the Ministry of Health and Family Planning, while Mahmudul Hasan the Ministry of Home Affairs. The Ministry of Agriculture has been given to M.A. Munem.

Nationwide Anti-Rushdie Strike Affects Cities

BK2103060089 Hong Kong AFP in English 0520 GMT 21 Mar 89

[Text] Dhaka, March 21 (AFP)—Dhaka and other major cities came to a standstill Tuesday in response to a nationwide half-day work stoppage called by Moslem religous leaders in protest against British author Salman Rushdie.

Hundreds of police guarded possible trouble spots in the capital as a precautionary measure as all vehicles stayed off the roads, witnesses said. Shops, markets and the majority of offices remained shut in response to the half-day general strike ending at 1:00 P.M. (0700 GMT).

A group of seven Moslem leaders called for the strike last week and other religious parties and organisations later backed the call. Early reports said the strike was also enforced in the nation's second and third largest cities of Chittagong and Khulna as well as in other towns.

Police said small groups of people, including students, marched through Dhaka's streets shouting slogans for the execution of the Indian-born Mr Rushdie. They also called for the burning of all copies of his controversial novel, "The Satanic Verses," which has been criticised by Moslems for blaspheming Islam.

There were no immediate reports of violence and the work stoppage was largely peaceful, the police said. Most banks in Dhaka's busy Motijheel business district partly opened their front gates but in the first hour of business attendance was thin and virtually no transactions took place.

Largely Moslem Bangladesh has already banned "The Satanic Verses" along with many other Islamic countries. Mr Rushdie is in hiding under police guard in Britain after Iran's spiritual leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeyni called for his execution.

President Hussain Mohammad Ershad told AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE Sunday that he wanted Mr Rushdie tried and punished for blaspheming Islam. But he disagreed with Mr Khomeyni's call for Mr Rushdie's execution.

President Ershad's ruling Jatiya Party and its two major rivals, the Awami League of Sheikh Hasina Wajed and Bangladesh Nationalist Party of Begum Khaleda Zia had neither backed nor opposed the strike.

India

Sri Lankan Tamil Delegation Meets 'Officials'

BK2003045089 Hong Kong AFP in English 0424 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] New Delhi, March 20 (AFP)—Leaders of a Sri Lankan Tamil militant group turned political party are here meeting Indian officials on measures to restore peace in the island's Tamil areas, a spokesman said Monday.

A four-member delegation of the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO) has held discussions with "some officials" since arriving last week on ways of bringing the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) "into the democratic process", a TELO spokesman said.

"Our main purpose is to try to bring the LTTE around by a political dialogue," the spokesman told AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, adding that the team would wind up its talks most probably Tuesday.

The LTTE, unlike other Sri Lankan Tamil groups including TELO, has repudiated a 1987 Indo-Sri Lanka peace agreement which sought to end a Tamil separatist campaign.

Since October 1987, the LTTE has been fighting 45,000-50,000 Indian peacekeeping troops in Sri Lanka's north and east—estimated to number between 45,000-50,000—in which more than 3,000 people have died so far.

The TELO delegation, led by its leader Amirthalingam Selvam, was to meet Indian External Affairs Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao and Minister of State for External Affairs Kanwar Natwar Singh, the spokesman said.

Discussions held with other officials had been "free, frank and cordial", he said. Indian officials were not immediately available for comment. But the spokesman added that the TELO, which last month won two seats in elections to the Sri Lankan parliament, had no direct contacts with the LTTE.

The TELO was once the strongest Tamil separatist group in Sri Lanka until a fratricidal war with the LTTE in 1986 in which more than 150 hardcore TELO guerrillas died.

Leaders of another Tamil rebel group turned political party, the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF), are also here to seek economic aid from New Delhi to rebuild the war-shattered Tamil areas of Sri Lanka.

The EPRLF team is led by Annamalai Varadaraja Perumal, chief minister of the island's North Eastern Province, and the group leader K. Pathmanabha.

Congress-I Party Member Burned to Death

BK2003153189 Hong Kong AFP in English 1510 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] New Delhi, March 20 (AFP)—Sikh separatists burned to death a leader of the ruling Congress (I) Party as six more died in violence in the northern state of Punjab, the PRESS TRUST OF INDIA (PTI) said Monday [20 March]. Sikh separatists also fired rockets at a school and raked the complex with gunfire Sunday in Punjab's frontier district of Amritsar, PTI said.

PTI said eight Sikhs armed with guns set on fire the house of Bikramjit Singh in Dhilwan village late Sunday when the politician barricaded himself inside after escaping the attackers. Mr. Bikramjit Singh died of burns, police quoted by the news agency said.

Sikh separatists have placed several members of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's party on a hit list because of their opposition to their six-year-old separatist campaign for a separate homeland called Khalistan, or Land of the Pure.

Rebels belonging to the Khalistan Commando Force fired six rockets at the Amritsar school, damaging its ceiling and the roof of an adjacent building, PTI said. The attackers also fired at the complex with assault rifles. There were no casualties, PTI said.

Sikh militants also shot and killed two Sikh members of a civil defence force which assists the local police in the anti-separatist drive in Amritsar, a separatist stronghold, PTI said.

Paramilitary security troopers shot to death in gunfights two wanted Sikh militants in Amritsar's Madhoke village and another in Faridkot District, PTI said.

An unknown number of Sikh assailants killed a Hindu passenger late Sunday moments after he disembarked from an express train in Sangrur District, police were quoted as saying.

At least 300 people have died this year in Punjab in violence linked to the Sikh campaign. More than 2,200 people were killed last year.

SPGC President Resigns; 7 Killed in Punjab

BK2003164689 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1600 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] The president of the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee [SGPC—Sikh Temples Management Committee], Mr Gurcharan Singh Tohra, has resigned his post. Agencies quoting SGPC sources say Mr Tohra submitted his resignation letter to the SGPC executive members. They met Mr Tohra at Canal Rest House at Khaza near Amritsar where he is detained. Mr Tohra is believed to have resigned in protest against the sacking of the secretary, Mr Manjit Singh Kalcutta, by the SGPC executive at its meeting held in Chandigarh last Friday. Mr Tohra took exception to the manner in which the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee had been working for the last 1 year. The sources also confirmed that there were heated exchanges at the meeting.

In another development, the former chief minister, Mr Surjit Singh Barnala, has declined the presidentship of the Akali Dal-L [Longowal]. He was unanimously elected at a delegate session of the party at Sangrur today. Mr Barnala told the delegates that he was not accepting the post so that he could make better efforts to bring unity among various groups of the Akali Dal.

Accepting Mr Barnala's request, the delegates decided to retain Mr Tota Singh as acting president.

Elsewhere in the state, seven people, including two hardcore terrorists, and a youth Congress-I activist were killed since last night. An official spokesman said in Chandigarh that a hardcore terrorist and self-styled general of the so-called Bhindranwale Tiger Force, Sahib Singh Tahura, and one of his accomplices were killed in an encounter at a farmhouse in Amritsar District today. Another hardcore terrorist, Jasvinder Singh, was killed in a separate encounter in Faridkot District. Some arms and ammunition were recovered from him.

6 Persons, 2 'Terrorists' Killed in Punjab

BK1903160589 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] In Punjab, six persons and two hard-core terrorists were killed by the security forces, who also arrested 12 harborers, since yesterday. In an encounter the security forces shot dead Jasvinder Singh, alias Happy, a dreaded terrorist, this afternoon while his accomplice managed to escape.

In an intergang rivalry, Anup Singh, an activist of (Janke) gang of the Khalistan commando post, was gunned down at his native village Babri Nangal in Gurdaspur District.

Terrorists shot dead a couple at Lakhana village in Tarn Taran area and injured one woman. Another person was killed by two terrorists of Sikarmacha in Batala District. Two persons were killed by unidentified assailants elsewhere in the state.

Ropar District police have arrested seven terrorists and recovered one revolver, four pistols, and ammunition from them.

Pakistan Trains Kashmiri Youth in Terrorism

BK2003091889 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] The Jammu and Kashmir chief minister, Dr Farooq Abdullah, has said that security all along the Jammu and Kashmir border has been tightened to prevent entry of Kashmiri youths after their training in terrorist and subversive activities in special camps in Pakistan.

Replying to supplementaries on a question in the [state] assembly today, he said about 300 Kashmiri youths have been trained in these camps and out of these who returned to the Kashmir valley 97 were captured. He said among those arrested were also some active workers of the Muslim United Front and the People's Conference.

The chief minister said the arrested youths will be released and rehabilitated, but only after their proper debriefing in jails. Dr Abdullah said the people of the border areas would be given incentives to help curb the border crimes and anti-national activities.

Delhi Police Seize Heroin; Arrest 2 Foreigners

BK1803033189 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Delhi police have seized heroin worth 15 crore rupees concealed behind electric fittings. Two foreigners have been arrested in this connection.

Rajasthan Chief Denies Resignation of Cabinet

BK1803132789 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] The Rajasthan chief minister, Mr Shiv Charan Mathur, has clarified that members of his cabinet have not tendered their resignations to him, but have only offered to do so if necessary in the interest of the party.

Earlier, agency reports said that all the Rajasthan ministers have tendered their resignation.

Our Jaipur correspondent reports that the chairman of the AICC-I coordination committee for Rajasthan, Mr Bir Bahadur Singh, arrived in Jaipur this morning along with the committee member Mr L.P. Sahi. Later talking to newsmen, Mr Singh said that they will meet Congress-I MLA's [members of legislative assembly] and party office bearers during their 2-day stay. He said the purpose of his visit is to seek better coordination among party members at all levels and make efforts to remove dissatisfaction, if any. When asked how he viewed the boycott of the assembly proceedings by some party MLA's on Thursday [16 Mar], Mr Singh said he is assessing the situation.

2 Students Develop Computer Virus Antidote

BK1703144589 Hong Kong AFP in English 1425 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] New Delhi, March 17 (AFP)—Two Indian software programmers have developed an antidote for a computer virus which infects diskettes and distorts existing programmes, the UNITED NEWS OF INDIA (UNI) reported Friday.

Computer graduates Y. Venkateswara Rao and Prakash Nalla of southeastern Andhra Pradesh State have developed a programme which can detect and cure infected soft diskettes, it said.

The antidote, "Vaccine Plus," can detect and isolate a computer virus named (C) brain and eliminate it before it infects existing programmes, UNI quoted the two programmers as saying.

Mr. Rao and Mr. Nalla said they have successfully used the antidote to destroy the (C) brain virus in the infected computers of a firm in the port city of Visakhapatnam.

A computer virus is a small programme that can infect, multiply and damage existing programmes or stored data on diskettes. The virus can transfer itself to a computer's memory, take over its operating system and transfer a copy of itself onto fresh disks.

A computer terminal will flash on its visual display screen the source of infection after the vaccine plus programme is introduced, the two experts told reporters during a demonstration of the software protection programme.

Computer experts at Delhi University earlier this month warned that a virus called Ashar had infected several diskettes and destroyed stored data with an identifying message: "welcome to the dungeon."

Indian programmers say that sooner rather than later computer viruses will pose a serious threat to the country's growing computer network.

Paper Details Defense Budget for 1989-90

BK2003084589 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 1 Mar 89 pp 1, 20

[Text] New Delhi, Feb. 28—The resource crunch and the "continuing need for implementing measures for greater cost effectiveness" have led to a marginal reduction in the outlay for Defence, from Rs [rupees] 13,200 crore in the revised estimates for 1988-89 to Rs 13,000 crore in the budget for 1989-90, that Finance Minister S.B. Chavan proposed along with an assurance that the Government would not falter in "ensuring the highest level of Defence preparedness."

The reduction would appear to be much more than marginal when judged in the light of the fact that even the normal inflation rate had not been accommodated in

Defence spending. The compulsions of an election year, the lack of the political will to fight the criticism against Defence spending and a perception that a near-detente prevails so far as the two neighbours, China and Pakistan, are concerned, appears to have led to the virtual pegging of the Defence outlay at the previous year's figure.

Mr Chawan's reference to the "extremely difficult circumstances" under which the armed forces were carrying out the "arduous responsibilities" of defending the country, and the assurance of the defence preparedness of the highest order was welcomed by members with the thumping of desks.

The revised estimates for 1988-89 provide for Rs 200 crore in Defence expenditure to "meet pending commitments." An additional Rs 497 crore were also spent to meet arrears in respect of pensions arising out of revision/liberalisation of pensions effective from April 1, 1986, and further additional relief in pension during the current year.

The pegging of the Defence outlay at Rs 13,000 crore would mean that what formed 17 percent of the budget in 1987-88 and 15 percent in 1988-89, has dropped to 14 percent for the next year.

The Army has suffered a major Rs 345 crore reduction in the outlay, from Rs 7,116 crore in the revised estimates for 1988-89, to Rs 6,771.55 crore. The Navy gets a slight decrease from Rs 799.90 crore in the revised estimates to Rs 784.50 crore, while the Air Force has been lucky with a small Rs 23 crore hike, from Rs 1,850.20 crore in the revised estimates to Rs 1,873.20 crore.

The outlay for Defence ordnance factories, which was reduced last year because of the inability to absorb the amount, has been further reduced by a good Rs 46 crore. The revised estimates stand at Rs 186.65 crore, but the outlay for 1989-90 is Rs 140.09 crore. It is likely that along with the public sector undertakings under the Ministry of Defence, the ordnance factories may also undergo major changes in costing and inventory control. Under the Defence Services' Capital Outlay, the ordnance factories have been given Rs 361 crore.

The ordnance factories cater to the needs of the three Services. Their supplies to the Services have been estimated at Rs 1,318 crore for 1988-89 and for the next financial year, a small increase of Rs 1,341.79 crore has been envisaged.

The major capital-head of Defence Service has an increased outlay from Rs 3,726.95 crore in revised estimates to Rs 3,907.37 crore.

Under this head, the acquisition of aircraft and acro-engines [as published] has been given a lower outlay. The Army gets Rs 18.67 crore against Rs 17.45 crore, the Navy, which has an increasing air arm, Rs 332.43 crore against the revised estimates of Rs 406 crore and the Air Force, the principal user, a reduced Rs 976.86 crore against Rs 1,054 crore spent during the outgoing year.

There are similar decreases for construction and heavy and medium vehicles, but under "other equipment", the Army gets Rs 772 crore against Rs 564.79 crore and the Air Force Rs 95.72 crore.

Low-Power TV Relay Center Opens in Chhindwara

BK2003054189 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] A low-power television relay center was inaugurated at Chhindwara yesterday by the information and broadcasting minister, Mr H.K.L. Bhagat. This is the 14th relay center in Madhya Pradesh. It will provide TV facilities within a radius of 25 km.

Mr Bhagat said there are 183 transmission centers now in the nationwide TV network and by the end of the eighth plan the number will go up to 423. He said TV programs will be formulated to suit the aspirations and needs of the common man.

Lok Dal Leader Bahuguna Dies 17 Mar

BK1703125089 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Excerpts] The Lok Dal leader and veteran freedom fighter, Mr H.N. Bahuguna, is dead. The end came at a hospital in New York today where Mr Bahuguna was recovering after a bypass surgery. Mr Bahuguna was a former union minister and chief minister of Uttar Pradesh.

Mr Bahuguna left for the United States on the 27th of last month for the surgery, the second in the last few years. Though his condition was described as fine after the operation yesterday, complications developed later. [passage Omitted]

The president, Mr R. Venkataraman; the Lok Sabha speaker, Dr Bal Ram Jakhar; and several other leaders have condoled the death of Mr Bahuguna.

Iran

Khomeyni Sends New Year's Message to Muslims

LD2003172689 Tehran Television Service in Persian 1600 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Ayatollah Khomeyni's New Year message; duration 4 minutes—recorded]

[Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. O You, the controller of hearts and minds; O You, the manager of night and day; O You, the transformer of the environment and our fate, transform our situation into the best situation. The interpretation of transforming our situation into the best situation is that we would change our attitudes in this New Year, God willing; that is, a true transformation takes place in our minds. This means the same as the prophets and their lifestyle from the beginning to the end, whose war and peace was for the sake of God. No prophet went to a war except for the sake of God, and did not make peace except for God.

This year our New Year has come between two feasts. One was the auspicious birthday of his holiness Imam Husayn, peace be upon him [11 March, birthday of third Shi'ite imam], who revived the religion of Islam from the early Islamic era until the end of time. The other is the feast of 23 March, the birthday of the lord of the era, may our souls be sacrificed for him, who will revive the religion of almighty God until the day of judgment. We hope that in this New Year our nation will act in the same manner as the prophets and in the same manner as the saints.

The important point is to overcome carnal desires. All through life mankind is afflicted with carnal desires, which require self-discipline. And I, as the speaker of these words, have not succeeded in this task. I hope that the Iranian nation and the world's Muslims can transform themselves this New Year to work for the sake of God and not for the sake of their own domination, victory, and carnal desires.

May God bestow success upon everyone in the struggle for the path of Almighty God. May this day be auspicious to everyone, and may God unite all Muslims against global blasphemy. May God's peace and mercy be upon you all.

Khamene'i's Message Emphasizes Reconstruction

LD2003155189 Tehran IRNA in English 1533 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Tehran, March 20, IRNA—President 'Ali Khamene'i today laid emphasis on reconstruction, cultural and educational affairs and development of oil and petrochemical industries as major plans to be executed in the new calendar year, beginning tomorrow.

In a message on the eve of the year 1368 of the solar Hejira, the president also stressed special attention towards issues relevant to environment protection, expansion of ties with the outside world "free of the spirit of arrogance," and strengthening of the country's defence power.

"The year holds great promise since the country's reconstruction policies have been drawn up and set before the government," he added.

The public is expected to play a "vital role" in various fields, since reconstruction is practically impossible without people's backing or contribution, said the president.

"In order to ensure the country's independence, special attention should be paid to economic issues, production fields, science, research and rebuilding of the armed forces," he said.

The president also pointed out the need to stem cultural decadence and to safeguard the great Islamic heritage of Iran in the new year.

He said that boosting of non-oil exports alongside the development of the oil industry is an important factor in commercial transactions and thus should be given high priority.

Khamene'i's message called for massive public turnout for the fifth presidential polls due to be held in Mordad (July 23-August 22).

Outlining the major events of 1367, it said the outgoing year began with Iraqi missile and air attacks, saw the unmanly U.S. downing of an Iranair passenger plane and ended with the West's cultural plot against Islam in the shape of Salman Rushdie's blasphemous novel "The Satanic Verses".

The president termed acceptance of U.N. Resolution 598 as the most important move of the Iranian leadership, and people's mobilization to thwart enemy attacks as something "great" in contemporary history.

Criticizing the consumer culture promoted in Iran by the former monarchial regime, he urged people to follow the dictates of Islam and avoid extravagance.

Towards the end of the message, the president expressed hope that Iran would achieve further success and dignity under the leadership of Imam Khomeyni.

Further on Khamene'i Message

NC2003193489 Tehran Television Service in Persian 1535 GMT 20 Mar 89

[New Year's message by Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i, president of the Islamic Republic and Tehran Friday imam, in Tehran on 20 March—live or recorded]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. I wish to convey my sincerest greetings and happiness on this auspicious Nowruz festival and the advent of spring with the blossoming of nature to my dear compatriots, to our reverend imam and beloved leader of the Iranian nation, and especially to the great and worthy families of our martyrs and the self-sacrificing devotees of the revolution, as well as the families of the POW's and MIA's. I wish to convey my deepest and special sincere greetings to the heroic and selfless brothers who are still suffering in Iraqi prisons, and I pray to the Almighty for their eternal success. I hope and pray that the entire Iranian nation, especially the esteemed families of these dear ones, will be overjoyed by seeing them as soon as possible.

We are on the brink of another year, another one of the eventful, phenomenal, and formative years of the Islamic revolution. This past year was one of those unique and historical years. It was a year characterized by some important events in the life of this nation, which manifested themselves in a most conspicuous manner. During this year the biggest decision of our society and nation in years was made; that is, our great leader's decision to end the war and accept a cease-fire, which was supported by our people.

This past year was also a year in which the West's concerted plot against our nation and revolution revealed itself. At the beginning of the year, during the first half, this conspiracy, this inimical and brutal position, manifested itself in the form of shooting down a civilian airliner by a U.S. warship in the Persian Gulf. This resulted in the martyrdom of a large number of our people. All the people aboard the airliner were killed. In the second half of the year, this plot materialized in the form of the West's coordinated policy of a cultural onslaught, a cultural campaign through support for a filthy and despicable book against Islam, Muslims, and in particular the Islamic Republic.

In the past year, we witnessed some of the greatest and most vociferous gatherings of our people at various ceremonies and at various times of the year. On the 'Id-e Ghadir, the people held a massive march to show their support for the imam of the nation and to renew their allegiance to him. On 22 Bahman [11 February], the people staged mammoth, enthusiastic, and unique marches and gatherings to celebrate the day of the liberation of the Iranian nation and to show respect for the 10 Days of Dawn and the anniversary of the revolution, which entered its 2d decade. Recently, there were numerous marches and gatherings in support of the great imam's decree regarding the cultural onslaught and its pivotal element [Rushdie], and in support of the lofty message by the imam of the nation on cultural and scientific issues, as well as issues relating to the seminaries and the role of the clergy. Most important of all was the people's great mobilization in the last month of Tir [22 June-22 July] on the anniversary of the enemy's aggression within our territory. It can, without exaggeration, be termed the largest national mobilization. Even the imam of the nation referred to the presence of the people, as until that date perhaps such a great mobilization of people had never been seen.

All these events are evidence of the sincere, caring, and earnest presence of the people on all occasions pertaining to the revolution, which will assume amazing and interesting meaning when viewed in the perspective of the enemy's massive plots.

We and our nation have put this year behind us, with all its eventfulness. Of course, the hardships and ordeals and the intensity in various cases was far greater in this year than the others. The year began with the firing of missiles and continued with hardships and difficulties for our people throughout its course. There were various kinds of pressure—economic, political, and military—put on our nation this year. However, as we recall the events of this year, our people endured all this with fortitude and greatness, seeing it as the same heavy price that every country has to pay for its independence and freedom, and smiling while interpreting it in this way.

We are on the threshold of a new year, a new effort, a new phase, a new era. We should prepare ourselves. The next year, 1368 [1989-90], will be an important one for the Iranian nation and its officials because it will be the 1st year of extensive reconstruction, which God, willing, should take place in the true sense of the word. In the past 10 years we had reconstruction as well, and it was not obstructed by the war in such a way that we need to embark on a total reconstruction of our society and country. Today reconstruction has a different meaning. It is an extensive reconstruction, a popular and multilateral one.

In this reconstruction, policy-making is a fundamental stage, and I can give the following good news to our dear nation: Praise be to God, the policy-making by the assembly appointed by the imam has been completed and the policy agreed upon for reconstruction in the most important and major sectors was submitted to the imam and then relayed to the government.

The next stage is planning on the basis of these policies, which we hope will be continued with earnestness and enthusiasm. However, the most important stage of all is taking action, and there is no other way except with the people's support at this stage. Without the people's backing and participation, without the people's political and active assistance, there cannot be any kind of reconstruction by anyone. You, dear nation, should think about this point and pay attention: The revolution can only become tangible to the people in the form of a multifaceted reconstruction of the country and society. This is not possible without the people in general, or without the leadership of the officials and the administrators of the system.

In the next year, the year which will certainly be the harbinger of major construction, we have certain recommendations to make. First of all, I would advise all to follow the course of piety and abstemiousness. This is the essence and true spirit of our task. Without this, neither the officials nor the people will get anywhere. Our path is one of piety and abstemiousness, and our great goal is so lofty that it cannot be reached without piety and virtue and exacting endeavor.

The next priority is the initiation of an extensive reconstruction, especially on the economic and production front. Another priority is the issue of science and research efforts by the country's universities and research centers. If we do not have these, then we do not have any hope of independence or of cutting the ties of dependence.

The issue of military structuring and correct organization, the complete training and equipping of the Armed Forces in proportion with the loftiness of our objectives, and the extent of our enemies' malice is the next priority which should be attended to this year.

Cultural reconstruction and the preservation of our great cultural Islamic heritage, along with the obliteration of the vestiges and the dregs of the idolatrous culture, is another priority which should be dealt with, not only in this year but in all the years to come.

The issue of environmental protection, in addition to the issue of austerity—that is, refraining from extravagance by the people in general and also by officials—is the next important point which should be concentrated upon. When we speak of austerity, it does not mean that our dear nation should be subjected to hardship. We want every citizen to live in abundance, but this will only be possible when our nation learns to practice thrift. For years a consumerist culture, an idolatrous culture taught us to squander and spend extravagantly. For years we will have to strive to substitute all that prodigality and erroneous extravagance with Islamic austerity and an abstention from the incorrect lavish spending of the past, which is prohibited by God.

In the field of commerce, reliance on non-oil exports, as well as expansion of oil products and industries related to gas and oil and petrochemicals, is one of our objectives and priorities.

Finally, there is the expansion of political ties with the world, with every country and nation desiring sincere and friendly ties with our great nation, removed from any spirit of arrogance.

The last point I want to mention in this regard is that this year our nation should be prepared for presidential elections. We should be prepared to enter a new era with a new president, which, by the grace of the Almighty and the hope of divine blessings, will be an entrance to better and sweeter days with more suitable decisions for all of the people.

We hope that our country, with the leadership of our dear imam and under the shadow of this great and historical figure of our era, this noble and dear element of the Iranian nation and beloved by the Muslims of the world, will be able to perform all these major tasks and traverse all these difficult stages.

Once again, I repeat my sincerest greetings and salutations to all of you, O dear nation, especially the esteemed families of martyrs, the self-sacrificing devotees and their families, and the POW's and MIA's and their respected families. May God's blessings be upon you.

Musavi Pays New Year's Visit to Khamene'i

LD2103110989 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 21 Mar 89

[Text] On the first day of the New Year, Prime Minister Musavi, accompanied by the cabinet, met President Khamene'i at the President's Office. During the meeting, the president, the prime minister, and the cabinet members, while wishing each other a happy New Year, prayed for long life and good health for the imam of the ummah.

Judges Receive Instructions for New Year

LD2003120489 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] In order to prepare the Islamic Revolution prosecutors' offices in the battle against the merchants of death, high prices, and hoarding during the New Year period, a letter of instructions was issued today by Musavi-Ardabili, president of the Supreme Judicial Council, addressed to the judges of the Islamic Revolution's courts and prosecutor's offices.

According to the Central News Unit, the instructions refer to the relentless pursuit of smugglers and merchants of death and the battle against corrupt persons. The instructions state: In view of the fact that, with God's blessings and with the guidance of the Islamic revolution's honorable leader, effective steps have been taken toward the destruction of corrupt elements and narcotics smugglers and in view of the fact that the continuation of those measures are a necessity and a duty, the taking of any leave by judges of the Islamic revolution courts and prosecutors' offices throughout the country over the New Year period is forbidden. As the battle against high prices and hoarding has also been made the responsibility of Islamic revolution courts and prosecutors' offices, the confrontation of that social problem requires an orderly and coordinated plan. Therefore, for the sake of establishing such a plan, all transfers between Islamic revolution courts and prosecutors' offices are forbidden until further notice.

Embassy in Bonn Denies Role in Pan Am Attack

AU2103091489 Frankfurt/Main FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE in German 21 Mar 89 p 1

["Ban." report: "Iranian Embassy: Not Involved in Attack"]

[Text] Bonn, 20 March—On Monday [20 March] the Iranian Embassy in Bonn rejected reports by British papers according that say the perpetrator of the bomb attack on the U.S. passenger plane, which crashed into the Scottish village of Lockerbie in December, had worked out of the embassy. The reports say that the Libyan, who was known as a terrorist trainer, had arrived in Bonn 1 week before the attack on 21 December, which killed 270 people. A diplomat at the Iranian Embassy reportedly offered him facilities to prepare the attack in the embassy. Now, to substantiate its denial, the embassy has used the words of the spokesman of the FRG Federal Prosecutor's Office, who last week said that reports that the attacker is known to the security authorities were "absolute nonsense." The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran has had nothing to do with terrorist actions, a statement said.

EC To Allow Ambassadors To Return to Tehran

LD2003185289 Tehran IRNA in English 1812 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] London, March 20, IRNA—Foreign ministers of the European Community have agreed that any member state can allow their ambassadors to return to Tehran.

The decision was made in Brussels Monday only four days after Iran won the backing of the 46-member Organization of Islamic Conference in declaring British author Salman Rushdie an apostate.

At the last foreign ministers' meeting four weeks ago, the EC agreed to support Britain's call to show some reaction to the fatwa [religious decree] issued by Imam Khomeyni against Rushdie by recalling their envoys from Iran "for consultation". The Islamic Conference declaration last Thursday was seen going further than the U.K. had expected and called upon all Muslim states to ensure that Islam was respected in the wake of Rushdie's book, "The Satanic Verses," which was denounced as blasphemous.

The decision to allow ambassadors to return to Tehran is being left to individual countries but is seen as blow to Britain from its allies in its dispute with Iran.

The U.K. Government now faces the prospect of again being isolated as the only European country without representation in Tehran following Iran's decision to sever diplomatic ties with London two weeks ago.

The ministers insisted they still reject the fatwa issued on the author for apostasy and agreed for the time being to continue the suspension of high-level visits to and from Iran.

3 Countries To Send Envoys

AU2003164389 Paris AFP in English 1611 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Brussels, March 20 (AFP)—Greece, Ireland and Italy are set to send their ambassadors back to Tehran, diplomats said here Monday, a month after the 12 EEC nations agreed to withdraw their top envoys from Iran to protest death threats against British novellist Salman Rushdie.

Faced with pressure from the three countries, European Economic Community (EEC) foreign ministers Monday agreed that Community members should have the individual authority to decide when to send their ambassadors back to Iran, they said.

"Some who have reasons for sending their ambassadors back will do so," a source said.

The returning ambassadors "will be sending a very strong message to Iran expressing the total unacceptability" of its death threat against Mr. Rushdie, he added.

France, the sources said, argued unsuccessfully for a coordinated return of the ambassadors, who were recalled to their capitals on February 20 for "consultations." [passage omitted]

Velayati on Envoys' Return

LD2103124689 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 21 Mar 89

[Text] Our colleague Ja'fari has interviewed the foreign minister, Mr Velayati, on the European Economic Community's decision to return its ambassadors to Iran. This is the subject of our first news report, to which we draw your attention:

[Begin recording] [Ja'fari] We have heard in the news that the EEC member countries have decided to return their diplomats to the Islamic Republic of Iran [IRI]. Could you please tell us what factors have made them change their minds and your analysis of this issue?

[Velayati] Following the very decisive fatwa [religious decree] of his holiness the imam, may his lofty shadow extend, and the very strong cohesive support of the IRI Government for this historic fatwa and its defense of the sanctity of Islam and the noble prophet, may God's peace and salutations be upon him, the West European countries took a measure which, in my view stemmed from their poor understanding of Islam and the Muslims and the power of Islam among the Muslim people of the world. The IRI, after a decisive response—which was the only thing to be expected—dispatched an expert delegation comprised of several competent and experienced personalities to the Islamic Conference Organization [ICO]. As you are aware, our team had not attended the ICO foreign ministers preliminary session, and we had only requested via telex that the issue of the blasphemous book, "The Satanic Verses," be put on the agenda of the conference. However, as no member of our team was there yet to defend this proposal, it was removed from the agenda. However, when our delegation arrived in Riyadh it launched an all-embracing defense at the experts' session; and fortunately, the issue was raised in the ICO meeting and was put on the agenda.

Thanks to the efforts of our colleagues and the cohesive support of the Islamic world for his holiness Imam Khomeyni's fatwa, eventually the ICO adopted a position which once again demonstrated the might of Islam in the world. It unitedly supported the fatwa of his holiness the imam, may his lofty shadow extend.

I think what happened in the EEC, at the EEC session, is a kind of return to realism and an appreciation the importance of Islam, the Muslims, and the Islamic sanctities in the world. And we announce once again that our Foreign Ministry is not the defender of Iran's interests alone, but defends Islam's interests on the international arena too. And it never hesitates on the path of this objective. [end recording]

Romania, CSSR To Supply Tanks, Missiles

NC2003160189 Paris AFP in English 1527 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Abu Dhabi, March 20 (AFP)—Iran is to receive hundreds of tanks and missiles under agreements signed recently with Romania and Czechoslovakia, a United Arab Emirates newspaper reported on Monday.

The Abu Dhabi-based AL-ITTIHAD, quoting unnamed East European sources, said the two states would also help Iran build arms factories to replenish supplies destroyed during the eight-year war with Iraq.

Romania will supply Iran with 300 armoured vehicles and tanks and 180 tank-carriers and will also help build a naval base in Qeshm Island in the Strait of Hormuz, according to the paper.

The Hormuz Strait, the Gulf's only outlet to the Arabian Sea, was the scene of repeated shipping attacks during the Iran-Iraq war, which ended in a United Nations-brokered ceasefire last August 20.

Romania will also help Iran modernise a tractor plant in the town of Arak to produce armoured vehicles, AL-ITTIHAD said.

Under an accord with Czechoslovakia, Iran will receive 180 T54-55-type tanks, which Prague produces under Soviet licence. The deal also include an anti-tank and anti-aircraft missiles factory in Esfahan, the paper said.

Maneuvers in Persian Gulf Planned for Apr

LD1903132889 Tehran IRNA in English 1325 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] Tehran, March 19, IRNA—Joint land, sea and air military exercises would be conducted by the Iranian Armed forces in the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman late next month.

Navy Commander Rear Admiral Mohammad Hoseyn Malekzadegan was quoted by the daily ETTELA'AT Sunday that naval units, Air Force jets, and Army airbone units would take part in the maneuvers.

Commentary Examines Lavasani's Visit to USSR

LD1903140889 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1050 GMT 19 Mar 89

["Political Commentary" entitled "The Visit of Our Country's Foreign Ministry Representative to the Soviet Union"]

[Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Our country's deputy foreign minister for international affairs who went to Moscow at the head of a political delegation, met and conferred with the Soviet foreign minister and the Foreign Ministry deputy for international affairs. During these talks, the two countries' bilateral relations and regional issues were discussed. Although in recent months the economic cooperation between the two countries in the fields of commerce, oil, gas, transport, and energy have been increased, the good neighborly political relations have been one of the main causes in shaping their relations. Therefore, in the meeting between Hoseyn Lavasani and Eduard Shevardnadze, both sides insisted that with further meetings and increased cooperation, it is possible to expand relations up to a point consonant with the resources of the two countries and suitable for the two large neighboring countries.

During this visit, Lavasani conveyed our foreign minister's message to the Soviet foreign minister. According to reports on their discussions, the follow-up of agreements reached during the recent visit of the Soviet foreign minister to Tehran and the cooperation and the coordination between the two countries in areas of international and regional issues were the foundations of this message.

At the moment, from a regional point of view, Iran and the Soviet Union have important issues to raise and discuss, primarily Afghanistan, the Persian Gulf, and the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 598 on the Iran-Iraq war.

With the withdrawal of the Soviet military forces from Afghanistan, the main differences between the two countries on the Afghan issue are decreasing and the grounds for some clearer and more explicit talks on this issue have been prepared. Concerning the Persian Gulf, the officials in charge of the country's political affairs have always approved of the Soviet Union's stand on the withdrawal of foreign forces from the Gulf. Lastly, within the framework of the issues concerning the imposed war, the problem of halting Iraq's obstruction to peace in the region by the implementation of Resolution 598 is of great importance. Now, in light of imam's message—parts of which concern the political relations of the two countries and was followed by the Soviet leader's reply to this message—the relations between

Iran and Soviet Union have reached a higher level than in the past. Therefore, it is expected that the discussions between our deputy foreign minister for international affairs and the Soviet foreign minister will bring some practical results in areas of cooperation and understanding between the two countries.

Commentary on Headdress Issue in Turkey

NC2103092889 Tehran International Service in Turkish 1700 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] After the law was changed allowing the wearing of the headdress in Turkish universities, Iranian university students issued statements cautioning the Turkish Government. The students defended the view that the Muslim people in Turkey, particularly university students in that country, must be free to act in accordance with Islamic principles and propagate and spread Islamic values. They also described the decision adopted by Turkey's Constitutional Court on the question of wearing the headdress as a clear ruling against Islam.

The Iranian university students supported their counterparts in the Turkish universities. They urged them to continue their opposition and protests against the ruling until it is abrogated.

Several political parties in Turkey have voiced support for the demonstrations and protests by the female students in the country. It is believed that the move made by these parties will allow Islamic groups and parties in Turkey to carry out their activities. It is common knowledge that, given the fact that 98 percent of the population in Turkey is Muslim, these parties could create very serious difficulties for the continuation of the present government and regime in that country.

Meanwhile, it is believed that unless the Turkish Government reinstates the former law, which allowed the use of Islamic attire and headdress in accordance with the Constitution, the Muslim people in Turkey, particularly the students in that country, will continue their protests and demonstrations.

Kuwaiti Ruler Sends Message on Rushdie Novel

LD2003183989 Tehran IRNA in English 1826 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Tehran, March 20, IRNA—In a message to President 'Ali Khamene'i Monday, Kuwaiti Amir Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad Al Sabah reiterated that Kuwait and Iran shared an identical stance on Salman Rushdie's blasphemous novel "The Satanic Verses".

The Kuwaiti amir said his country had proposed to the recently concluded meeting of the Organization of the Islamic Conference in Riyadh to take united step to confront the sacrilegious book. He expressed hope that ties between Muslim states would further expand on the basis of mutual respect and coexistence in the interest of Islamic nations.

The amir's message was in response to a written message from President Khamene'i warning against the West's cultural plots against Islam.

Khamene'i Visits National Radio Station

LD1903131389 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 19 Mar 89

[text] This morning, President Khamene'i visited various sections of the Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran. According to the Central News Unit, during the visit the director general of the Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran delivered a brief report about the improvement in the quality of programs since the revolution, and existing issues and problems.

Afterwards, the president visited the archives, the production unit, and the recording studios. He also spoke with writers, artists, and radio producers. In addition, Mr Khamene'i attended a gathering of radio employees in which he praised the employees, referred to the sensitive and important role of artists in this area, and said: Through these means you reach the people and participate [as heard[in their happiness. In your radio programs you must always have the great and historic movement of the people in mind. You must know that, today, the world is watching our nation's revolutionary movement.

In conclusion, Mr Khamene'i said: Art is a means of enhancing lofty human ideas and, in radio programs, revolutionary spirit and human fervor must play guiding roles. Radio has performed better in comparison with other mass media and it is pursuing a very good course.

Supreme Tribal Council Holds 7th Session

NC1903073789 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0330 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] During the seventh session of the Supreme Tribal Council of Iran—held yesterday afternoon and chaired by Mr Mir Hoseyn Musavi, prime minister and chairman of the Supreme Tribal Council—it was decided that the Tribal Affairs' Organization of Iran will estimate the monies needed for the reconstruction of the tribal areas damaged by the imposed war and to submit this estimate to the state reconstruction headquarters.

During this meeting it was also decided that the Tribal Affairs' Organization of Iran prepare the plan for tribal routes and for other executive organs, as well as the plan for the purchase of 2 million head of cattle and submit these to the Council of Ministers.

It was also decided that the Ministry of Agriculture take the necessary steps to ensure the supply of the cattle feed and medicine needed by the tribes.

At the end of this session, Prime Minister Mir Hoseyn Musavi emphasized the need to accelerate the implementation of the decisions adopted by the Supreme Tribal Council of Iran, and especially the need to establish, as soon as possible, a general directorate for tribal education and to implement the plan for free nutrition for tribal students.

Part I of Editorial on Budget's 'Shortcomings'

NC1703142089 Tehran RESALAT in Persian
7 Mar 89 pp 1, 12

[Part I of two of editorial by Ahmad Tavakkoli: "Observations on the Country's General Budget"]

[Excerpts] The Islamic Majlis began its deliberations this morning with a debate on the budget for next year. Every year at this time we witness the airing of the Majlis deputies' opinions on the government's economic performance and on its various social, cultural, and political effects. [passage omitted]

In all these past years [since the revolution], the budget has been formulated and subsequently approved without following any specific guidelines. There has also been no sign of a general economic policy announced by the administration in 1984 and later regarding the people's participation and refraining from nationalization.

This year, following the acceptance of Resolution 598, the imam of the nation outlined the salient features of the policy for the period of reconstruction that primarily emphasizes the policies announced 4 years earlier, the details of which were to be worked out by the policymaking council.

Before the policymaking council could announce any strategy for development, the government presented a bill called the first development bill, which was approved on 16 October 1988. The rapporteur of the Plan and Budget Commission, speaking in defense of the bill's details, clearly admitted that the imam's message on reconstruction does not appear very strongly in the bill. He also admitted that the country's economic structure has not been rectified, that the financial system has not been specified, and that the means for achieving the strategic objectives are not too clear in this bill. Moreover, he gave reasons for these shortcomings. Despite this state of affairs he, as well as the plan and budget minister, wanted it approved.

Once again, it can be seen that the principled modus operandi has been ignored and the budget for the next year, which is the first in the era of reconstruction, has been compiled without any definite program and without acceptance of the policies announced for reconstruction. This means that it is not only not geared to expansion, but is rather haphazard, which can result in complications and greater pressure on the oppressed and deprived strata of society. With the continuation of the present unfavorable trend, future development becomes more difficult, as does planning. We will discuss this in later issues along with the negative effects of the 1989 budget. We will also discuss plans and proposals for a temporary solution of the problems.

Part II of Editorial

NC1803110189 Tehran RESALAT in Persian
8 Mar 89 pp 1, 12

[Part II of Ahmad Tavakkoli's editorial entitled "Assessment of Past Performance Is the Guiding Beacon of the Future"]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] The debates at yesterday's open Majlis session by deputies favoring and opposing the government policies attests to the fact that most deputies consider the budget undesirable but are aware that not much can be done at this point. It is almost the end of the year and the issue has to be concluded one way or the other, and they are viewing the issue as an exigency. Before beginning today's discussion, it is necessary to stress a point to the esteemed Majlis deputies and our dear people:

For the past few years, a haphazard, unbalanced, unplanned, and inchoate budget has been approved, and in most of its sections, legal obligations have been ignored and a policy was implemented which resulted in printing currency notes without any backing, an increasing gap between rich and poor, and the rise of numerous social and official problems. Now, even the group of experts and those who are proponents of government's policy consider the government's erroneous financial policy the real cause of inflation and the weakening or impotence of effective financial, propagandistic, and cultural policies.

Every year, in the same manner and based on the same reasoning, an improper budget, detrimental to the independent economy and the people of the country, is imposed on the Majlis deputies. [passage omitted]

The question is: Why was the performance of the country's budget for the years 1987 and 1988 not assessed and made accessible to the people? It is obvious that the esteemed Majlis deputies take a lot of trouble to approve laws to be implemented. If the people had been made aware of the performance of the budget in recent years, the public would have known about the violations of the budgets laws and clauses and that the resulting chaos inherited from the previous idolatrous regime was aggravated by problems stemming from the war and foreign pressure.

If the legal obligations had been carried out, the people would have realized that the cause of the backbreaking inflation, the feeble nature of the government sector, weak financial and credit policies, lack of investment, and the spiraling unemployment stemmed from the government's financial operations resulting in more than 1,100 billion rials in government debt to the country's banks.

If the economic reports had been made known to the people in a timely manner, the people would have been able to judge correctly the economic issues instead of relying on the analytical reports of experts. As a result the government spokesman would not have been able to say that the government had succeeded in resolving the economic problems and the problems of the legal vacuum or the actions of the government's opponents. [passage omitted]

Will the deputies who have endured suffering be willing to approve a budget which will add 140 billion rials to their previous debt and will circulate more currency in the market, without any backing and thus adding to the burden of the oppressed people, fixed-income employees, and workers?

IRNA Outlines Details of New Year Budget

LD2003195889 Tehran IRNA in English 1945 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Tehran, March 20, IRNA—The budget for the new Iranian year approved Monday permitted the government to set up infra-structure projects on foreign credit worth up to dlrs 2.5 billion.

The rials 9,782.7 billion (dlrs 139.75 bn) also provided more funds for agriculture and education but was criticized even by supporters for lack of direction in what has been declared "reconstruction year".

The Majlis ordered the Central Bank to give the necessary commitments to allow relevant government agencies to import dlrs 1.5 billion worth of equipment for basic industries. But it set a condition that annual payments, not exceeding dlrs 200 million, should come from foreign exchange savings or money made through the export of goods produced by the new industries.

Contracts must be signed within the next two years.

The Energy Ministry also received the go-ahead to seek credits up to dlrs 1 billion to build power plants with total capacity of 4,700 megawatts. Annual repayments should not exceed dlrs 150 million.

The Majlis limited foreign exchange allocation by the Central Bank for various ministries and purposes to dlrs 9.814 billion, from total export earnings, almost entirely from oil. The estimate for Iran's oil sales in the year 1368 (March 21 1989-March 20 1990) was not immediately available.

But in an interview published last week Prime Minister Hoseyn Musavi said the country's foreign exchange position had improved considerably due to strengthening oil prices.

The government's Foreign Investment Agency meanwhile was allowed to use one percent of profits earned through investments abroad to reinvest and pay bonuses to employees instrumental in increasing profits.

The deputies also voted for a proposal raising by rials 4 billion (dlrs 57.1) [as received] the amount for research on atomic energy. The total figure could not be obtained.

The Agriculture Ministry was given a large share of the dollar funds, about 1.3 billion worth, to see Iran self-sufficient in wheat production—a dream since the 1979 Islamic revolution.

Minster 'Isa Kalantari had insisted before the Majlis debate that Iran could stop wheat imports within five years if necessary funds were made available. Majlis deputies said they had given what the ministry had asked for.

Figures for defence spending in the first "post-war" budget were also not at hand. But the daily RESALAT in an article in the middle of the 12-day budget debate said money set aside to "strengthen the defence structure" had been almost halved. It said rials 410 billion (dlrs 5.85 bn) had been allocated for this purpose in the new budget while last year it amounted to about rials 700 billion (dlrs 10 bn).

The paper said despite statements that the war had consumed as much as 30 to 50 percent of the budget in previous years, figures in fact show that in seven years up to March 1988 war expenditure was no more than 14.4 percent of total spending. It said the government spent rials 4,160 billion (dlrs 59.4 bn) on the war during the said period.

About half the budget concerns some 170 large state-owned companies which according to law must be included in the national budget.

Frequent complaints made about lack of university facilities, especially student dormitories, seemed to have had an impact on the deputies who boosted funds for more facilities. The government was allowed to spend rials 7 billion (dlrs 100 mn) on building and completing student housing projects and more than doubled funds for purchasing and furnishing buildings for this purpose to rials 9 billion (dlrs 128.6 mn).

The Higher Education Ministry was also given dlrs 80 million in foreign exchange to purchase laboratory equipment and books.

The Education Ministry was allocated rials 14 billion (dlrs 200 mn) to employ more teachers after warnings by Minister Mohammad 'Ali Najafi that the system was in need of urgent attention to meet the demands of the growing student population.

Also rials 5 billion (dlrs 71.4 mn) was set aside to create jobs for unemployed soldiers who spent 6 successive months in the war fronts, and rials 23 billion (dlrs 328.6 mn) for distribution of monthly support to the 530,000 needy persons aged 60 and above.

The Martyrs Foundation received rials 122 billion (dlrs 1.7 bn) and the Foundation for the Disabled (ex-Mostazefin) an extra rials 15 billion (dlrs 214.3 mn) to be spent exclusively on providing care for disabled combatants.

The Foundation for the Disabled received strong criticism for seeking the extra money because it already had a rials 700 billion (dlrs 10 bn) budget which should have supported the disabled. The deputies cut the government's proposed rials 30 billion fund for the foundation by half.

The debate which ended after 12 days included complaints by deputies in favour and against the government-proposed budget, that it was not leading the country anywhere.

"This budget has not been prepared according to a plan. We must accept this bitter reality," said Morteza Alviri the head of the Majlis Plan and Budget Committee. Nevertheless he urged colleagues to give their support in hope that the five-year plan currently under consideration in the Majlis would set the direction.

Concern was also raised on increasing domestic borrowing, which came to rials 555, 1,330, and 1,275 billion (dlrs 7.9, 19, and 18.2 bn) between March 1985-88. The figure for domestic borrowing in the new year was also not available.

Pakistan

Spokesman Says Kabul News Conference 'Propaganda'

BK2003155589 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Pakistan has described the news conference conducted by the Najibullah regime in Kabul yesterday as cheap propaganda during which two persons were introduced, identified as Pakistani intelligence officers, and were then made to confess to allegations of spying. A Foreign Office spokesman in Islamabad today said it is obvious that such statements, made under pressure, have no significance. Moreover, he said it has not been proved that these two persons are Pakistanis. And even if they are Pakistanis, then this is not the first time this has happened: The Kabul regime arrests foreigners, keeps them under detention with no opportunity to contact their consulates, and later presents them to the media and forces them to voice the Kabul regime's propaganda. The spokesman said that the Kabul regime claims that these two persons were captured in the Qandahar region a few weeks ago, and the obvious objective of presenting them at this stage is to accelerate the regime's current propaganda campaign alleging Pakistani militias' involvement in fighting in the Jalalabad region.

Apart from this, there is no position of corporal in the Pakistani Armed Forces or police as has been alleged about one of the two persons. Furthermore, no person less than 26 years of age can become a sergeant or subedar major [military rank] in the Pakistani Army as has been claimed about the other person. The spokesman said such [word indistinct] acts indicate the confusion existing in the Kabul regime.

Afghan Envoy Summoned

BK2003165389 Hong Kong AFP in English 1631 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Islamabad, March 20 (AFP)—Pakistan rejected as propaganda Monday the presentation by the Kabul government of two prisoners identified as Pakistani noncommissioned officers arrested for spying in Afghanistan.

A written statement issued here the Foreign Ministry said "in a blatant and crude propaganda exercise the Kabul regime staged a press conference in Kabul on March 19, where it produced two persons who were made to identify themselves as Pakistani intelligence officials and to confess to spying charges."

The Kabul government presented the two men Sunday to the press and foreign diplomats at a Foreign Ministry conference hall.

Kabul officials said the capture of the two men proved Kabul charges that Pakistan has increased its involvement in Afghanistan since Soviet troops completed their withdrawal last month.

"It is obvious that such statements made under duress are worthless," said the Pakistani Foreign Ministry statement. "In the first place, it is not proven that the two persons are Pakistanis. However, even if they are, this is not the first time that the Kabul regime has resorted to arresting foreign nationals, detaining them without consular access and later producing them before the media and forcing them to corroborate Kabul's propaganda," it said.

The Pakistan Foreign Ministry statement also said there was no such rank as corporal in the Pakistan Army or Police and that it was not possible for a 26-year old to have the rank of sergeant.

The two prisoners, who identified themselves as Muhammad Afzal, 26, a corporal in the Pakistani Criminal Investigation Division and Muhammad Ashraf, 25, a sergeant in the Pakistani Militia, were presented to the press and foreign diplomats at a Foreign Ministry conference hall in Kabul on Sunday.

Presenting the two men was "clearly aimed" at boosting Kabul's recent propoganda that Pakistan Militia and military personnel were helping the mujahidin in their battle to take the strategic eastern Afghan city of Jalalabad, the statement said. The mujihdin began a big offensive to capture Jalalabad on March 7. The battle, which continued Monday, has resulted in heavy casualties and forced thousands to flee, rebel and government sources have said.

The Afghan charge d'affaires in Islamabad was summoned to the Pakistan Foreign Office and a strong protest lodged with him over "this propaganda stunt." The statement said, adding that there would be "serious repercussions" if Afghanistan did not stop such actions.

Afghan Refugees Continue To Cross Border

BK2003051189 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Malik Waris Khan Afridi, the minister of state for states and frontier regions, has said that a plan for the speedy return of Afghan refugees to their homeland has been prepared and will be implemented only when aproper conditions exist inside Afghanistan for the return of refugees. He said the United Nations will supervise the return of the refugees.

The minister of state added that more refugees are coming to Pakistan due to the current situation in Afghanistan.

CPC Delegation Meets With Benazir Bhutto

BK2003163289 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1600 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] The visiting 5-member [as heard] delegation of Chinese Communist Party led by Mr Xian Huanghua had a meeting with the prime minister, Ms Benazir Bhutto, in Rawalpindi this evening. They discussed matters of party relationship. The delegation extended an invitation to the leaders of Pakistan People's Party to visit China.

Yaqub Khan Assesses Initiatives at ICO Meeting

BK1703114189 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] At the ICO [Islamic Conference Organization] foreign ministers conference in Riyadh, Pakistan took a number of initiatives to keep the region free of nuclear weapons. Talking to newsmen in Karachi today on his return from Saudi Arabia, the foreign minister, Sahabzada Yaqub Khan, said Pakistan delegation extended full support to the Arab and the Palestinian causes. It pledged support for a best and (?acceptable) settlement of the Jammu and Kashmir issue on the basis of relevant UN resolution and in the spirit of Simla agreement.

The foreign minister said Pakistan informed the conference about the indignation of the country over the blasphemous book "The Satanic Verses" and explained the steps taken up by the government against the book and its author.

Curfew Lifted for 4 Hours in Karachi 21 Mar

BK2103033889 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 21 Mar 89

[Text] In Karachi the curfew has been relaxed in Shah Faisal Colony, Model Colony, Malir, Malir Extension, and Malir city police station limits for 2 hours from 0700 this morning. The curfew will again be relaxed from 0500 to 1700 this afternoon.

U.S. To Help Manufacture Combat Helicopters

BK1803132389 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Pakistan is to manufacture combat helicopters with American collaboration. Preliminary talks in this regard have already been held between defense officials of the two countries. Sources in Islamabad have reportedly said that in the first phase, such helicopters will be assembled. The production will begin in the second phase.

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